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Yoga from Shore to Shore

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Yoga Publications Trust, Munger, Bihar, India

Yoga from Shore to Shore



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Swami Satyananda Saraswati

*A collection of lectures given by Swami Satyananda Saraswati
during his 1968 world tour.*



Yoga Publications Trust, Munger, Bihar, India

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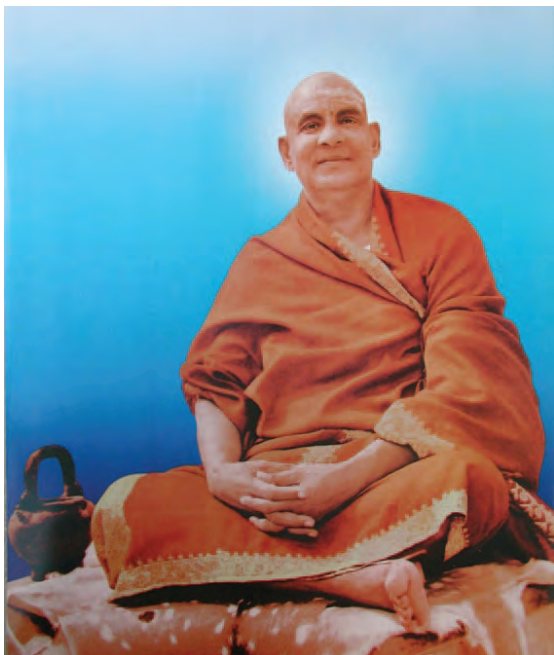
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Dedication

*In humility we offer this dedication to
Swami Sivananda Saraswati, who initiated
Swami Satyananda Saraswati into the secrets of yoga.*

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Preface to the First Edition

This book contains a diverse selection of the best lectures and practical classes on yoga given by Swami Satyananda Saraswati during his 1968 world tour. It is a unique collection in that it covers all the different aspects of yoga in detail from widely varying viewpoints.

Swamiji is a masterful speaker. His lectures are always spontaneous and he chooses the topic and tone of his speech only after he has met the audience. During this tour, his programs were arranged at many different types of locations, varying from prisons to television studios and from postgraduate medical colleges to insane asylums. This wide range is reflected in the themes and textures of the different sections of this book.

The original transcription of the speeches from magnetic tape was done by Swami Yogeshwarananda, director of the Rajnandgaon School of Yoga in Madhya Pradesh, India. The collation and editing of the speeches was done by Bindu (Miss Renate Kette) and Swami Yogananda, both from Australia. The final section, entitled 'From Shore to Shore, a Tour Report' was edited by Nityananda, (Keith Adams, New Zealand).

All the typesetting, correction, printing and binding of *Yoga from Shore to Shore* was done by swamis of the Bihar School of Yoga, Munger, under the inspiration of their guru, Swami Satyananda Saraswati.

Today distrust is rampant, with families and nations facing civil wars; yet man is simultaneously launching a new search in quest of himself. If I were asked now for a way to earthly harmony, I would say, “Carry the message of yoga from shore to shore and from door to door.”

—*Swami Satyananda Saraswati*

1

What is Yoga?

Mandarin Hotel, Hong Kong

Spiritual seekers!

We will start talking about the science of yoga right from the beginning so there shall be no misunderstanding or misconception about this great and life-saving science, which the rishis of the past discovered in their silent practices. Reference to the word 'yoga' first appears in the most ancient book, *Rigveda*, in which it is said that Brahma, the Cosmic Creator, preached the science of yoga to *hiranyagarbha*, the golden womb. In Hindu mythology Brahma, or the Creator, represents the creativity in the individual and the creative power in the cosmos. In each and every being, in me and in you, there is that cosmic art of creativity, and that cosmic art of creativity is the mythological Brahma of the Vedas, who preached yoga to the people.

The rishis and sages tried this science and in meditation they had experiences of light, unconsciousness, expanded consciousness and cosmic consciousness. These experiences led them on to discover all they could about yoga and, right from the Rig Vedic period, they tirelessly investigated the mystic, the mysterious, the great secret and the great wonders that were being manifested by the human mind unconsciously and superconsciously.

Then came the Upanishads, which tried to define yoga, and finally this science was summed up by the great Rishi Patanjali in his sutras on yoga. Today, these yoga aphorisms of Patanjali come to us in Sanskrit with commentaries in different languages. In the beginning of the sutras Patanjali gives a definition of yoga as being 'the complete control over the patterns of consciousness'. So, therefore, following Patanjali, we say yoga is a method by which we have absolute control, mastery and knowledge of all the states of consciousness, of all the patterns of consciousness.

The individual awareness in us functions in different states of sleep, dreaming and experience over which we have no personal control. As such it isn't possible for one to harness the great energies which are inherent in this consciousness, to realize the great faculties of awareness, the great powers which one has in him. It appears that every human being, every individual has great power, great knowledge, great experience and great understanding in him which is a part of his own self. Consider how, with the conscious mind, with conscious awareness of which man has become master, how many miracles he has been able to realize and how many discoveries he has made. If he could only master the subconscious forces and also the unconscious forces, how much more he would be able to accomplish!

When we say yoga is a process which gives us complete mastery over all the stages of awareness, we mean yoga enables you to penetrate different realms of your consciousness and see what is happening, what is hidden inside. At night, when you sleep, you become unconscious. If, during deep sleep, in your unconscious state you could develop consciousness consciously and become a witness of your unconscious state, you would know a lot more about yourself than you know now. And when you dream at night, if you could develop consciousness of the process of dreaming, just as you are conscious of the process of hearing when I am speaking, perhaps you would understand more about life than you now know.

When we dream we are helpless. We dream because we have to dream, not because we want to dream. In the interval between when you go to bed and become unconscious within ten or twenty minutes, and when you get up in the morning, do you know where you are? You are in a room which is full of power, in a room where there are switches which can control all the electric installations, where there are books, but we ignore their content. We are helpless. We go to the room and we come out without anything, and how helpless we are. We see everything passing by our side and we can do nothing about it. We are hypnotized. We are unconscious.

Is there a method by which we can develop a high state of awareness, a high degree of consciousness, of wakefulness in that dark chamber of knowledge? In our sleep, when we go to the room which is so full of potential, when we go to the room where so much knowledge is written, can we open our eyes and see what is there? It is possible only if you possess control over the patterns of your consciousness, so that whilst one part of your consciousness goes to sleep, the other part of your consciousness remains awake, and with this wakeful consciousness you study the sleeping consciousness.

So, yoga can be defined another way. We can call it a method by which we can maintain individual consciousness even in an unconscious state. The development of this awareness is realized through meditation, through different practices of willpower. In these practices one particular symbol, one particular mantra or one particular point of awareness is carried through without any changes from conscious to subconscious, from subconscious to unconscious and, later on, from unconscious with a jump to the superconscious.

Sometimes yoga is defined as a method which develops the subconscious and unconscious, but this cannot be the right definition because the development of subconscious and of unconscious is the spontaneous culmination of your own personality. You can develop these, even outside the practice of yoga. You go to sleep every night, every night you dream. Even if you do not practise yoga, you sleep

and dream. Therefore yoga is not a way to develop the subconscious and unconscious, but it is a method of seeing the subconscious and unconscious.

When yoga is utilized for the development of the unconscious and subconscious it is hypnotism, not yoga, but if the yoga is utilized for witnessing the unconscious and subconscious then it is yoga. Of course, a certain stage in yoga involves hypnotism because this brings relaxation. When you are trying to negate your consciousness and withdraw your consciousness from the objective universe, you have to follow a course of relaxation, and then a certain amount of hypnotism is involved and there is no harm in using it.

When your consciousness is withdrawn from outside to inside and is just slipping into the state of subconsciousness, it becomes necessary to give a name to your consciousness, a form, or to create a symbol or a hypothetical centre for your consciousness. In this way, when you pass to subconsciousness you can still maintain your awareness.

If, when you leave the outer room of consciousness and pass into the inner chamber and from there to the innermost chamber, you can maintain consciousness all throughout, without any change, or fluctuation, or any diminution in consciousness, then that is true yoga. But if, when you pass from conscious to subconscious, awareness decreases and reaches a state of extinction, then you are not doing yoga as it should be practised. When my meditation is incorrect, I pass to my subconscious mind and I am unable to understand anything; there is no coordination between intellect and experience, and between the faculty of reasoning and experience. Although there is experience, there is no understanding of experience; there is no awareness of experience.

Now I shall give a third definition of yoga, a supplementary definition. That is, yoga is a process of dehypnotization of subconscious and unconscious states. So, yoga is a process of knowledge, of awareness, of understanding, observing

and fulfilling our experience. This is how we define yoga. The first definition is: yoga is an art by which we have complete mastery over all the patterns of awareness. The second definition of yoga is: it is an art by which we become a spectator of all the experiences of awareness. The third definition of yoga is: it is a process of dehypnotization of all the stages of consciousness.

Now I shall give the literal meaning of yoga. The word yoga is a Sanskrit word which means 'to join', 'to meet' or 'to yoke'. When two individuals part from each other, it is called in Sanskrit *viyoga*, disunion or separation, and when two individuals or two objects of the same likeness come together, it is union, communion and it is yoga. The problem is who meets whom and who unites with whom? Because what is taking place when we practise yoga is not a process of union, but it is almost a process of disunion, for when we practise meditation we are separating ourselves from the external consciousness; we cease to hear, we cease to think, we cease to understand, we cease to experience the exterior surroundings. So is it union or is it separation?

It is said in various books, not only the *Yoga Sutras*, but also the *Bhagavad Gita* and the book of yoga by Rishi Vasishtha, *Yoga Vasishtha*, that individual awareness, freed from the sense world and from objective experiences, becomes one with cosmic awareness. According to Vedanta, this awareness by which you know me and I know you, by which I see you and know I am doing so, by which we know our surroundings, by which we experience everything, past and present, is a small fractional manifestation of the cosmic power, of the cosmic consciousness. Therefore, in Vedanta they had two words to make this discrimination: *jiva* or the individual awareness, and *atman* or the cosmic awareness.

Awareness, when it functions through intellect, through mind, through the medium of the senses and the medium of the body, is known as the individual awareness. When this consciousness becomes withdrawn by the process of negation from the mind, from the body, from its associates, when it is

completely free from association with prakriti, completely disjointed from lower mediums and functions without any medium, the state of cosmic consciousness is realized.

When consciousness functions through the senses, it is called sense consciousness; when it functions through the body it is body consciousness; when it functions through the intellect it is intellectual consciousness; when it functions through the mind it is mind consciousness; when it functions in a diminished condition, it is sub-consciousness; and when it functions without any form it is unconsciousness; but when consciousness functions without any medium, in its natural form without any obscuring filtre, then it is known as cosmic awareness, divine awareness or transcendental awareness.

Knowledge is a pattern of consciousness. So also is incorrect knowledge a pattern of consciousness and absence of knowledge is a pattern of consciousness too. These are the lower forms of consciousness, the consciousness we experience every day – individual consciousness.

You are listening to my speech, your awareness is functioning through the auditory medium. I am looking at you and you are looking at me. Our consciousness is functioning through the ocular medium. I am thinking about the subject of my speech, my consciousness is functioning through the intellectual medium. In these ways, the pure, formless and nameless awareness has a form and a name. The name is ocular awareness, auditory awareness, mental awareness.

Who experiences pain and pleasure? Who understands things and who makes mistakes? It is the individual pure awareness, but through the various mediums. This consciousness is like formless light in front of which a film of perception, audition, feeling, knowing, moving, understanding and incorrect understanding is running. We see all that is taking place in front of us, for this world is a play of perceptions, this life is an experience of perceptions, it is an expression of consciousness through mediums, through filtres. When you remove these filtres there is no

life, there is no perception, there is no experience. There is only one experience about which I shall shortly tell you. Moreover, this consciousness cannot die even if you lose sensory perception. This consciousness does not cease to exist. It exists without interruption in all places and all circumstances, whether mediums or filters are there or not. The fact is, my consciousness can exist and will exist, and has been existing, even though once, 'I was not'.

This is what is meant by yoga. Yogis knew the certainty of the continuance of consciousness even when we cease to exist in life. They discovered that in every being there is something which can exist without any medium and they started trying to work out ways to develop that state at will, voluntarily. So, a fourth definition of yoga is: yoga is a process by which we can make our consciousness free from any medium of knowledge. In other words, yoga is a process by which our consciousness is enabled to function with complete knowledge and experience, but without medium, without limitation. This is the state of superconsciousness.

Yogic texts say that superconsciousness can see without eyes, can think without mind, can hear without ears and can feel without any medium. It does not gain knowledge from outside, for knowledge is its nature. It does not get experiences from the exterior world, for experience is its nature. Cosmic consciousness is not subjected to time or to subject, for it is homogeneous and infinite, and it is in every one of us.

To sum up, yoga is an art, a method of wrestling with your own mind. It is a process by which you free your mind from limitations and in this final state of liberation you gain more knowledge, light, peace, tranquillity, understanding, wisdom and infinite joy.

For the man in the world, who is continually being subjected to the wear and tear of tension, frustration and disappointment, who is living continually under pressure, yoga should be a method of equilibrium and balance of mind. For he who is involved in business, politics and worldly

activities, yoga should be a dose of relaxation and a mental tonic. For one who is trying to develop his faculties, who is trying to discover, trying to harness this great potentiality in man, yoga should pave the way to self-mastery, self-discipline, self-control and highest discovery. For one who is devoted to God or a particular religion, but whose mind is restless, who cannot concentrate in prayer, yoga should be a method to bring him more success, to make him more sincere, honest and one-pointed in his prayers, and show him the path. And for he who wants to attain samadhi, to practice and develop the highest state of consciousness, of super awareness, for him I am sure that there is no other practice than yoga. It is difficult in such a short space to tell what yoga should mean to each of us because to three million people yoga has three million definitions. Therefore, let the final definition of yoga be that yoga is a science of consciousness. Yoga is a science of personality and a science of creativity. Come to yoga and definitely you will realize that you have something more to give, something more to learn, and something more to gain.



2

Karma Yoga

Divine Life Society, Sydney, Australia

We are meeting under the banner of the Divine Life Society, Sydney. This brings me back to 1943, when I joined the newly growing ashram of my guru, Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh, when I was only nineteen or maybe twenty. The ashram was in the jungle. There were cobras, monkeys, mosquitoes and, above all, there were scorpions. Also, most of us, including Swami Sivananda, had to go on foot two or two and a half miles for our daily rations of food. Only once a week we got a little amount of vegetables. We were very unhealthy in those days. There were no people in Rishikesh then. Now it is a very big town, especially with the Divine Life Society and the many other ashrams that are flourishing there.

I came to Swami Sivananda in 1943 with a purpose. This was that I had attained a fairly good state of meditation and I would go into meditation and become unconscious, and I thought that I had attained samadhi. By samadhi I mean the highest state in yoga, but I was distrustful of it. One day I met a mahatma, a great saint, who was passing from my birthplace to Mount Kailash, a journey of about 160 miles. I told him about my achievement and he asked me to sit for meditation. I became completely unconscious. Later on he told me that everything was correct. I was going along the

right path in meditation. But what was this unconsciousness? It is true that I became unconscious to the outside world, but what about the inner awareness? I asked the saint to show me the technique of gaining awareness, but he said he did not know it. He said he was sure everything was all right with me and that what I needed was inner awareness, but that he could not help me further. So he told me that I should find a guru.

Somehow or other I came to Rishikesh and joined the ashram of Swami Sivananda, and the first thing he told me was, "Exhaust your karmas." I explained my difficulties to him. I said, "Swamiji, I have attained a fairly good state of meditation and this is the difficulty . . .", but he only repeated that I must exhaust my karmas.

You will be surprised to know that I spent twelve years exhausting my karmas there; nine of those years I was working in Swamiji's ashram as a cook, a scavenger, a servant boy, a typist, a manager, a secretary, a spiritual helper. In every respect, Swamiji tried me in a thousand ways. He asked servants to insult me; he asked me to misbehave with others; many times I failed in these tests, but after all, I had to exhaust my karmas. He might say, "The servant boy is bad, you will have to chuck him out," and just because my guru said it I would do it, but later on, during introspection, it came to me that I should not have done it. It was not divine life; it was not the higher life.

There appear to be two different standards of life. One is the human life, the human contact in which we have both good and bad. The other is the divine life where everything is judged from a higher standard. The human standard judges like this: if anyone inflicts an injury on you, you give back as good as you are given. The divine standard is if anyone inflicts injury on you, then you must just accept it with complacence. Swami Sivananda used to believe that for a yogi, for he who wants to attain the higher spiritual path, it is necessary that, alongside meditation, the divine life standard should be practised. For Swamiji, the ethical

way of living was not merely an adjustment with society, but primarily it was an act of purification. I should not steal from your property, not because it will send me to jail, but because it is not an act of purity. Similarly, I observe non-violence, and kindness and compassion for all people, not because it is ethical, but because thereby my karma will become exhausted and my heart will become pure. So, here is the way by which, in our day-to-day life, we can exhaust the dross, the density and the thickness of our karma. Our sense perceptions must be purified, for then only will life be illumined from inside. Swami Sivananda said to me a number of times, "Look, you have attained a very high state of meditation and you become unconscious, but you are unable to develop the supreme awareness in yourself. Why so? There still remains a boundary wall and you must overcome this boundary wall by working out your karmas."

I was with Swamiji for twelve years. Every day I was trying to come to terms with insult, injury, pain, hardship and pleasure, all alike. After twelve years he told me that now I should leave the ashram and that my sadhana was almost complete. "So far, you have been learning the divine life in the ashram with your spiritual brothers, you have been testing yourself. Now live in the world and see how you fare."

I left the ashram and for eight years I was moving throughout India from village to village, from state to state, on foot, by bullock cart, by train, by plane, any way. Sometimes people would criticize me and say, "Look how this young boy is wasting his time." Then I used to analyze myself, "What am I feeling?" Often I went without food because I had to live on alms. Sometimes, when I asked alms from a householder's place, the occupants who were educated people would say, "Get out from here," and they would insult me. Sometimes I used to get onto a train, a good friend having purchased a ticket for me for an air-conditioned compartment, and some sophisticated man would say, "Look here Swamiji, this is air-conditioned!" How very insulted I would feel, for I had as much right to the air-

conditioned compartment as this man who was insulting me so much.

I used to continually self-analyze myself to see how the knocks of life were affecting my inner state of mind, and with each year I tried to perfect that divine life in me. I do not say I am perfected yet, but I want to emphasize the importance of constant practise of this higher side of life together with your other yogic practices and meditation, for it is essential for combating that particular wall which hangs before samadhi and after meditation. After meditation there is a wall. I do not think that everyone here will be able to go through it; it is so difficult and it is so hard a wall. To exhaust, to break, to work out that boundary wall, Swami Sivananda used to say that the sadhaka's life must be of such nobility and so fulfilling that the onslaughts, tremors, shocks of life from family members from friends and enemies, from well-wishers and ill-wishers just do not affect him. He used to give us an analogy: "Imagine there is a solid young man standing and his little baby comes and pulls at his trouser leg and says, "Papa". Papa gets a surprise, but he does not fall because the baby is so small. In the same manner, let the troubles of life be like the baby to us. If they draw our attention, we must be aware of the tremors, but we should remain unshaken.

If that mental state is arrived at, which is not intellectual, but a state of being; if a state of discrimination, a state of awareness, a state of thorough self-analysis is once achieved you will find that your meditation becomes spontaneous. It is something like opening the cap of the petrol can and then passing a lit match over it. Everything is burned up in no time at all. I think meditation is the easiest thing to master, but the trouble with meditation is that our life, our thinking, our concepts, our reactions, our responses are not in accordance with the law that meditation demands. I know it is very difficult. It is not easy, but still, some kind of philosophy will help you all in life. Whether this philosophy is based on religion, on yoga or on bhakti, it must emerge

from the depth of your heart so that one day or the other when you sit for meditation, your consciousness shoots up like a rocket and goes to the highest point of samadhi. This is the relation of divine life and yoga. So side by side with yoga, do practise divine life little by little. If today it is not possible for you to practise it, I assure you that after having attained the highest state of meditation, you will find you cannot proceed further.



3

Awareness and Karma Yoga

Tokyo University, Japan

By the word ‘awareness’, I mean the act of becoming aware of one’s self. By increasing awareness, through meditation and with a one-pointed mind, you can travel deeper and deeper into the regions of your psyche until you reach the point of enlightenment.

What exactly is meant by the terms of enlightenment and awareness? There is awareness of the outside world; we hear sounds, understand things and our senses are capable of cognition. In sleep there is unawareness. At the most, if you try to concentrate and unify the tendencies of your mind in sleep you become aware of dreams and visions, but there is another awareness – an awareness of our innermost individuality. You are aware of the body; you are aware of thoughts; you are aware of your dreams, delusions and imaginations, but have you ever had a glimpse of an awareness different from these? To have an awareness beyond the body and mind awareness – this awareness is enlightenment. Or, in the language of the Upanishads, to be able to realize, understand, visualize the immortal personality in man, that which doesn’t undergo death and decay, this is enlightenment.

This enlightenment is misunderstood by many. During meditation light flashes may appear, we may lose body

consciousness, we may have beautiful scenes and experiences revealed to us and, in our ignorance, we think these experiences are enlightenment, but these experiences are only a process we have to experience as progress is being made in our meditation.

During the ultimate process of enlightenment, what happens? How does one feel? Unless one has attained enlightenment, one has no conception about it. Even he who has attained enlightenment is unable to express it because it is purely a matter of self-experience. Unless you have a tongue to taste, it is impossible to convey to you through the ears the exact nature of sweetness, but still there are aspirants who insist on being told!

Meditation begins at the point of pratyahara. Pratyahara is the fifth step of raja yoga, and literally means 'withdrawal of consciousness' or transcendence of the outer world and outer experiences. The experiences of smell, the experience of auditory perception, the tactile consciousness – all these are experienced through the medium of the senses. In meditation the mind can be withdrawn and disconnected from these mediums. The mind sees, the mind experiences and the mind cognizes through the different centres of the body, but when outer awareness is withdrawn, the body is there but does not feel. This stage is often believed by spiritual aspirants to be a very exalted state, but actually it is only the beginning, the first stage of pratyahara.

During the process of transcending the external world, visions and subjective perceptions are experienced. Sometimes they are mistaken for telepathic communications. These visions and dreams are due to the depth of the concentration, and they are symbols of the deeper personality. They manifest as the consciousness becomes subtler and subtler. When you walk through the market, you see different shops to the left and right, and it is an ever-changing scene. In the same manner, in meditation the mind experiences various things, changing scenes from within. It means that the mind is passing through the different

planes of consciousness: the conscious, subconscious and unconscious. Different layers, depths and heights are experienced. The experience may be of the astral plane, or it may come from a previous incarnation or from your present life. Sometimes, the consciousness develops forms and images of angels and demons, or perhaps the nature, character, tendency or personality of the meditator will symbolize itself in the form of hills, jungles, men or women, in beautiful or ugly forms, or otherwise. All this may happen during the deeper stages of meditation, but they are only distractions and must be discarded. Distractions may come from within or without, and they must come under your control. To remove these distractions, these images, these symbols from within, one must develop an unconscious willpower. A strong willpower in the conscious life, external life, will not help you here. One who has taken to the path of meditation will have to develop the unconscious will.

The faculty of conscious will allows us to be rid of the distractions and dissipations of the conscious state. If distracting thoughts enter my mind during meditation when I have not yet transcended outer consciousness, it will be the conscious will which eliminates them, but when I am deep in meditation, having lost contact with external consciousness, I am in the land of visions; I require only one object of concentration. Here, I need unconscious will in order to remove all the distractions from the spiritual path or from the path of meditation.

The unconscious will is developed by the use of a mala during the practice of meditation. The mala is moved from one end to the other and then the direction is reversed back to the starting point. One never crosses one bead, the sumeru, and so systematically the meditation is broken from time to time. The secret of this unconscious will is that the meditation is broken like this, periodically.

This might appear a novel method, but according to the guru tradition it is said that a beginner's meditation should be broken so that he can develop his unconscious will and

remove himself from any plane he doesn't wish to be in, as in the land of dreams, or so that he can correct his meditation.

You may have to break your meditation twice, thrice, four or five times. Many believe meditation should be continuous, unbroken, but I say it should have breaks until the form of meditation becomes constant and begins to shine in the inner space of your awareness.

In meditation your consciousness may become suspended; there is awareness of a time, but periodically it is overcome by a momentary void. Also one may experience telepathic communication and foreknowledge of things to come. These are obstacles or disturbances to meditation and these types of distractions are difficult to avoid. Many spiritual aspirants become lost in the snares. They become psychic and begin to practice psychic arts or spiritual healing, or they become telepathic mediums. These things are considered great achievements, but yogically speaking they are the downfall of spiritual life. The practitioners of these arts go on an off-shoot away from the object of meditation, for one can either possess siddhis or enlightenment, but not both.

Therefore, on the path of meditation there are three types of distractions: distractions on the conscious plane in the form of thoughts and external things, distractions on the astral plane in the form of visions, and distractions in a higher plane in the form of psychic knowledge and psychic events. The first type of distraction is quite easy to tackle; the second type can be removed with the unconscious will; but when psychic knowledge dawns and you become aware of new things in the deeper stages of meditation, progress becomes very difficult and many spiritual aspirants cannot go further.

In deep meditation when one has foreknowledge that such and such an event is going to happen, naturally meditation is broken, or even out of meditation one might feel that something is going to take place; one becomes so psychic. This is an achievement in itself, but so far as

meditation is concerned it is a distraction, a setback and it must be removed from the path of spiritual life.

To succeed here one has to be very careful. One must shun these psychic powers right from the beginning. The aspirant must put himself on the path of karma yoga, and do duties, physical, mental and intellectual. If he does karma yoga the spiritual power generated through meditation can be practically channelled, for this extra spiritual power, responsible for these psychic powers, must be properly utilized and directed. The *Bhagavad Gita* says that spiritual aspirants must devote all their time to the performance of duty through karma yoga. The meditator should never shun the active life. So, in order to avoid the distractions of the third type, it is necessary that one has some outlet for the expression of the current of spiritual power.

Only then is it possible for the aspirant to experience enlightenment as spoken of by Buddha, Christ, Mohammed and many other people. When you find yourself approaching this point of enlightenment it is something very wonderful. Consciousness remains intact, you have not lost touch with yourself, and yet at the same time you are not aware of the outer universe. You feel all throughout that you are awake, you are actually awake.

The experience of enlightenment, as I have said before, is indescribable. It is a point of consciousness where the world is lost for the time being, but the inner consciousness remains intact and nothing of the inner light is lost. Enlightenment is a process in the beginning, it is not a final state because the area of enlightenment is too vast. Beginning from self-awareness it is a process of ascendance; it is not a process of descension. It keeps on ascending and you feel the awareness growing within you. Awareness becomes more and more intense. You can feel this awareness as you can feel the forms of the world. Just as we see men and women around us, in the same manner this awareness is felt. It is not so much an expansion of awareness as a realization of awareness. It is like this. We can be aware that

an electric current is flowing through a wire, but that is not the same as if I happen to touch the wire, for then I will experience the electric current directly.

Knowledge and experience, knowledge and realization, they are two entirely different things. This is acutely realized in enlightenment. During the process of enlightenment, awareness becomes more and more prominent, and in the state of enlightenment the awareness experienced by you is at such a height or at such a depth that you can actually feel it. In that process of enlightenment, the ignorance, the distractions, the impurities, the difficulties and the doubts of life are completely rent asunder, and it is then that revelation starts. Revelation means an inner knowledge that manifests. The spiritual being, or the spiritual reality within, comes to prominence. Then one realizes it was not the speech, it was not the mind, it was not the lower body that was functioning in my life, but it was the lower spiritual person and reality.

Beyond the body there is the mind and beyond the mental personality there is the higher spiritual personality. It is always operating, it is always there, it is never absent in us, but it is we who are unaware of it. We are breathing all the twenty-four hours, but we are unaware of it. Our heart is beating, but we are unconscious of the fact. There are many processes in the body and in the mind, and there are various events in your own life about which you are always unconscious. It is because we are so extroverted that we do not know what is taking place inside us. Similarly, there is this higher awareness in us that we can develop consciousness of, not through the intellect, but only by experience.

I shall illustrate this point with an experience of Raman Maharshi. One day he felt that he was dying. He lay down on the floor and saw himself split into two. He then saw himself lying there as objectively as you see me now and I see you. It is possible for us to become aware of our spiritual personality in that manner, but it is rare, and for most of us, awareness of the existence of the body, of the mind and of the higher self

is absolutely absent. Just think for a moment: right through from morning to night how long are you aware of your existence? I mean physical existence, not spiritual existence.

We haven't the time to be aware, or rather we are just not aware and therefore we cannot be aware of our physical existence all the time. If we were, the tempo of day-to-day life would be disturbed, but it is possible, and just as you can develop awareness of the body, similarly you can have awareness of your thought process. But can you become aware of the spirit, *atman*, at will? No, and yet this is the one thing it is really important to be aware of – the immortal Purusha, the part of you which doesn't die. This man dies, the body; the other man also dies, the mind, but that third man, the immortal self, does not die.

It has no form and experience of it cannot be communicated, but nevertheless it can be experienced. The saints have given it three names: sat, chit and ananda. *Sat* means 'existence', 'pure existence', *chit* means 'consciousness' and *ananda* means 'bliss'. These are the three attributes common to all experience of this *Purusha*, this underlying consciousness. The Upanishads say this Purusha is of a golden colour and somewhere it is said it is luminous, but whatever it may be, it is hard to know. My only request to all spiritual aspirants is to be constantly aware, aware of the spiritual self beyond the body and the mind.

Enlightenment is a difficult topic to speak about and I have been trying for years to clarify my understanding of it. At the age of six, my spiritual life began with an experience. I was outside my body and I was able to see the body, but I could not feel it, and there was an awareness of a different type from the body and mind awareness. I had been trying for many years to experience that state again, but I did not succeed. When I first met Swami Sivananda in 1943 he just gave me one small key – he said, "Exhaust your karmas." The sadhaka must reduce the weight, the grossness of karma. In your awareness there are layers and layers of grossness: impressions, dirt, distractions, *vasanas* (the hidden desires)

and many, many other things. All these karmas should be exhausted. The exhaustion of karma is an important sadhana in the process of enlightenment.

If you exhaust your karmas, then surely experience in meditation will give positive rewards, but karma cannot be exhausted by karmas. Every karma brings a new impression, so in order to exhaust them, you will have to do karma yoga and not karma. What is the difference between the karma and karma yoga? Karma yoga is an impersonal karma without attachment. Karma is karma with absolute attachment. Karma creates anxiety and neurosis, whereas karma yoga never does. Karma gives rise to exhaustion, but karma yoga brings satisfaction. *Karma yoga* means selfless dedication and karma means selfishness. In karma everything is for myself and in karma yoga everything is for yourself. These are the distinctions between karma and karma yoga. By karma you add to your karma and your destiny becomes more and more gross. By karma yoga your personality becomes purer and purer, day by day until you experience unbroken peace of mind.

There is only one enlightenment; there is no incorrect enlightenment. Once enlightenment is achieved there is no more darkness in life, there is no ignorance. The light is very clear and the light is very quiet. There is tranquillity, there is no tension and everything is full of bliss. Discrimination between real and unreal is revealed during the process of enlightenment. Everyone can see that he who is enlightened has the light, he doesn't have to prove it, it is patent.

Enlightenment is the ultimate aim of human life. It is for enlightenment that everyone is born and takes on physical existence. This is the pinnacle of human effort and human accomplishment. It may be called enlightenment, nirvana, darshan, samadhi or kaivalya, but it is all the same. In all cases, to fulfil this life task, it takes a combined effort of karma yoga, bhakti yoga, jnana yoga and raja yoga. Raja yoga is difficult, simpler is bhakti yoga and much simpler than these is karma yoga. Karma yoga may be the simplest,

but that does not mean you should only do karma yoga. No, you must practice a synthesis of these three: karma yoga, bhakti yoga and raja yoga.

Meditation must be combined with karma yoga. If you meditate for three hours, then you must work for ten hours, and if you meditate for six hours then you must do eighteen hours work. It is like this: if you have so much vegetable, there must be this much salt; vegetables and salt are never in an equal quantity. Meditation is the salt of life, but karma yoga is the method or the vegetables. Never be lazy in the name of the spiritual path. Meditation combined with karma yoga brings about that awareness which is easily visible in the life of a man in his action, in his behaviour, in his thinking and in his contribution to society and towards himself.



4

Yoga Worldwide

University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii

Yoga has become an international and a most popular topic, but there are so many incorrect notions held about yoga. Yoga is not only practical and it is not exclusively spiritual, and while it is practical and psychological it is also a means to spiritual enlightenment, but spiritual enlightenment is for those who are fit and not everybody is really ready for it.

Before I can speak to you it is necessary that there is quiet and peace in the room, for if there is a lot of noise and people are screaming, my discourse would have no meaning for you. The point I am making is that spiritual enlightenment can only come when a certain amount of tranquillity, calmness and equilibrium has been attained. But sometimes this truth is misunderstood and people who are running after spiritual enlightenment, about which they have some vague idea, or their own self-styled notions, think they must become highly introverted and so they become psychologically abnormal and are misfits in society. Yoga is a way to become spiritually enlightened, I agree, but the first and most important point of yoga for us is how we can achieve tranquillity, equipoise and a state of complete relaxation. These states have become critically important in today's society.

Even those people who are not prepared to accept that they are restless and dissipated must, when they think about it, admit that they are. Many people say, “I am tranquil, my mind does not worry about things, I don’t suffer from psychic dissipation”, but I never believe them. If they undergo psychological testing and their entire personality is revealed through hypnosis, from their dreams or their instinctive actions, we see their true personality, fears and complexes. The first duty of every man is to become aware that he is unhappy, to realize that unhappiness is a fact of life. This is the first step in yoga. For most of us ignorance is bliss. We think we are happy, but our dreams, our tense muscles, emotions and psyche, reveal that we are not. Similarly the manner in which we accept, understand and react in society or in the family or within ourselves, show we have not attained that state of tranquillity.

Yoga is a method by which we can attain a complete state of tranquillity. Modern psychology and also Indian philosophy enumerate three types of tensions or afflictions. The first is muscular tension or physical tension. The second is mental or psychic tension and the third is emotional tension. These threefold tensions permeate our entire being. Even if you do physical work there will still be tensions. Or if you lead a sedentary life, sleeping on your bed or sitting on an easy chair for days together and say, “Well, I am going to relax the tension” – no, you will only pump up the tensions. This state of tension in an individual being is quite a natural state. It makes no difference whether you have worries or not, whether or not you have been working hard physically, whether you are undergoing an emotional crisis or otherwise. The tensions will still be there. So it is necessary for everyone to get rid of tension, to follow that course known as yoga.

Very recently yoga has become the topic of discussion in the research laboratories and scholars in psychology, renowned scientists not only in the United States and in Europe, but also in Russia and Poland, are investigating the

potentiality of the power of penetration of yogic awareness into the depths of the human personality.

Dr Sigmund Freud discovered depth psychology and probably you are aware of his system of psychoanalysis, but by experiment and experience it has been found that the system cannot be made available to the common man, for the whole process is so technical it is impossible for the common man to understand it. However, by using yoga methods everyone can become his own psychoanalyst.

The word *yoga* means harmony, union. It means harmony between the two conflicting personalities in man. We are not one; we are two personalities and these two personalities are always working through us. Clashes between ego and super-ego, between the intellectual personality, or conscious forces, and the subconscious and unconscious forces are always there. This conflict grows every day. Our duplicate personality, this split personality has grown so much that it is very difficult for us to know where the centre of the personality is, where these two conflicting forces meet.

It is not enough to dress properly or to have a nice social etiquette in order to develop mentally, to develop the reintegration of the personality. This is plain. The personality is deeper also than the mind. To develop an integrated personality you have to go to the depths of your awareness. A man may be ugly or weak, frail, not well dressed, but his awareness can still be deep. A man who possesses a reintegrated personality is a liberated man, for he is liberated from conflicts, from deep-rooted inherent tensions that directly or indirectly affect his personality and he can work in a manner free from error.

It is this aspect of yoga which has particularly interested scientists. Quite recently, a team of scientists did some research on the yogic posture *sirshasana*, the headstand pose. The results they got were so very positive that now it is considered a proven fact that he who is suffering from insomnia or from a kind of deep anxiety neurosis can safely practice *sirshasana* as a form of treatment. Russian

scientists went further and investigated the potentiality of concentration and its effects on individual behaviour.

When a man is disturbed and full of complexes, conflicts and anxiety his physical body undergoes a chemical change. All the glands are influenced by the process of anxiety: the adrenalin secretions, the parathyroid, thyroid, sex hormones, the pituitary. The moment anxiety catches hold of us, the heart experiences disturbance. Why does this happen? It remains to be proved scientifically, but I can tell you something about it.

The moment the brain is subjected to tension, the body produces poisonous chemicals. These poisonous chemicals pass into the body through the bloodstream. Directly or indirectly they are the cause of diabetes, nephritis, peptic ulcer, insomnia, coronary thrombosis and other illnesses.

You all belong to a sophisticated society and you are all well educated. As such this is a highly competitive society. You know the disease of coronary thrombosis is not a disease of the heart, it is a disease of success. It is a disease born of competition, a disease born of anxiety. This has been the conclusion of all who have researched this subject. Let us take the case of an underground leader, a political leader, a criminal or one who is trying to evade the police or evade paying taxes. In all these there is sure to be an unconscious fear in the mind. He may try to escape from his fear by drinking, by playing, by clubbing, by swimming and this or that, but in spite of all his efforts this fear will remain. This fear complex or phobia causes the hyper-acidic secretions of the individual, causing what we call peptic ulcer.

This phobia can become international and, when it does, it causes war. When you analyze the modern condition of the individual mind and of the international mind, it appears that today there is an urgent need to put a check or brake on it. This check or brake can never come from the various religions. Religion has failed in this throughout history. Law, police, armies, governments, constitutions all have failed, but a spiritual discipline, the discipline starting from the

individual, not from laws, constitutions, religious decrees, but from the individual who thinks to himself, "I must improve", only this can provide a solution. This can happen if man becomes yoga-conscious.

I shall now return to the discoveries of the research scholars. These scholars concluded that the faulty secretions in the body are caused by the excitement created by emotional disturbances, and that emotional disturbances are lessened when muscular tensions become relaxed. The whole body is muscular; therefore the whole body is to be relaxed. Your respiratory, your excretory, your circulatory system all have to be relaxed, for they are all muscular. So, the muscular system has to be relaxed, but how can we achieve this? First of all the research scholars tried the famous drug of India called ganja.

After some time they heard of the possibility of diminishing the state of awareness by certain methods of optical and auditory exhaustion. These are yogic practices. So, in their experiments a state of relaxation was brought about through the eyes and ears, but this relaxation was found to be incomplete and, even in the deep state of induced relaxation, when the mind had stopped functioning, the body still trembled, and the cardiograph and other machines did not show positive results. Then these scientists put the subject on a course of asana and pranayama (breathing exercises), and they found that if relaxation is preceded first by asanas and then by pranayama, it is more successful. Now they found that the subject showed very optimistic and positive signs of deep relaxation.

Now, just how far the practices of yoga can go, how deep into the personality and to what extent yoga can help man to get rid of his personal errors remains only to be proved and established scientifically. By personal errors I mean those errors about which man knows nothing, which have been piling up and accumulating in his subconscious mind since the very beginning of his childhood. There may be many years in our life when we are unaware of the impressions

we are accumulating and now, today, these impressions may have become active. My childhood impressions may have become very active and I do not know the cause, but I am very aware of the effects. I may be suffering from sinusitis or diabetes and the doctor makes a diagnosis, but he is unable to say why I have the disease; he does not know the cause. We know the effects, but the causes are in our subconscious mind. Yoga can be of great use to us here.

There is a possibility that yoga will become part of the university curriculum and then it will become an established fact that each one of us can correct his mind, his personality, thoughts and his schizophrenic or conflicting behaviours through yoga.

Indian philosophy says, and it has been proved by the saints and sages of India over many centuries, that peace and calmness are only attained from within, and not from without. Whether you possess material prosperity or not is unimportant, the bliss is subjective and comes only from within. Happiness can be obtained from outside, for it is dependent upon success, but bliss does not depend upon success. It is a state of awareness, it is a development of your personality, it is development of your mind, of your concepts, of your philosophy, which brings you to the state of bliss, the state of *ananda* as it is called in India, and it is very different from happiness.

There is a simple course of practice for this yoga. Please remember if you have heard the word 'meditation'. I am afraid to use the word meditation because of its religious background, so instead of the word 'meditation' I will use the word 'awareness', or 'to become aware'.

The first practice, the most important one, is to go deep into your own self. To relax your personality is to become aware of your self. The more you become aware of your body, of your thoughts, of your breathing, of your subconscious mind, the quicker will be the process of relaxation.

It is not a difficult practice, but know that the mind is very mischievous. It is very difficult to control the mind

even for a few seconds, but the question of control does not come into it. You don't have to control the mind. Sometimes you feel when a particular thought comes into your mind that you want to suppress it, but you should not. Rather, when you sit down quietly, in the morning or evening or at night, you should close your eyes for the present time and do nothing but watch your thoughts. Let good thoughts come or let bad thoughts come, you don't have to worry, you just remain a silent witness of all that is taking place within your mental awareness, just as if you were watching the TV screen.

Gradually you will find that your consciousness is going deeper and deeper – from the plane of ajna, from the plane of thought, you go into the plane of visions, the subconscious awareness. This is how the whole process takes place and is to be done.

This process can be practised through pranayama. It is a very simple practice. You have nothing to do but to remain aware of the breathing process which is taking place within the body. When you look into the body and become aware of the breathing process you will find that the mind is becoming quieter and quieter, every moment you will feel more and more relaxed. This is only a short introduction to yoga. A lot is to be practised and a little has to be known.

However, a misunderstanding has to be clarified. People have been saying that yoga has to do with supernatural and supernormal life, but this is not so. Doing some miracles, walking on fire, drinking nitric acid, stopping the heart muscles, and so many other things are identified with yoga, but please don't do them. Of course I don't have anything against the supernatural things that take place in the world, they are all right, but as far as yoga is concerned, yoga is a process of relaxing your thought consciousness. If thoughts are disturbed then that is absence of yoga. If your thoughts have become calm and quiet, and if you are able to think and decide and solve the problems of your life with absolute tranquillity, that is yoga.

Yoga is the process of looking within, but there is a common mistake made and this is, there are many people who, when they sit for concentration, become blank. This is not yoga, it is hypnotism. When you concentrate on any point, on any object or on anything, your consciousness can go in one of two ways. One is when lessening and cessation of awareness occurs, this is the way of hypnotism. The second and yogic way is expansion of awareness. You remain aware. You don't forget that 'you are', even though the objects of experience in the outside world have become absent from your awareness; even when you are forgetting about the outside world, still you remain aware of yourself. So self-awareness remains – self-awareness gets expanded. This is called yoga and is the process of yoga.

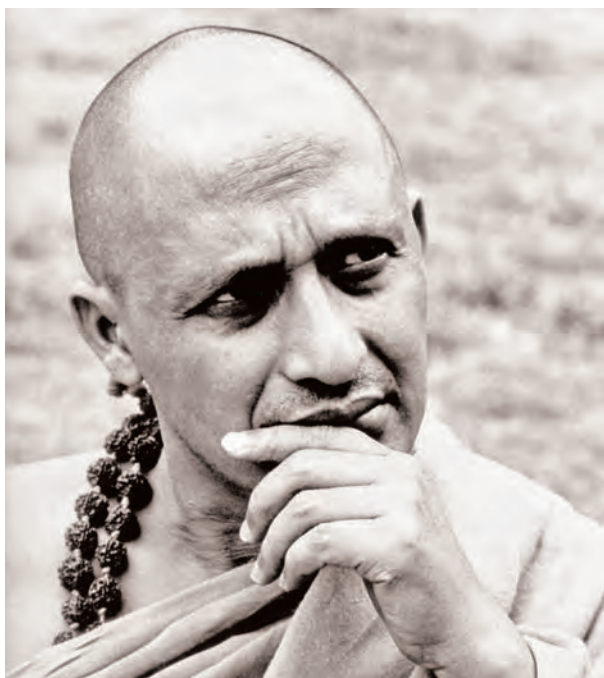
If the incorrect way is done, self-awareness will diminish and become extinct, and ultimately what happens is that you forget about yourself, and forget all that is taking place around you and you become nil inside. You become blank inside and you become blank outside. Always remember that when you are passing through the first stage of meditation or awareness, try to maintain self-awareness at all times. If you maintain this awareness you will come across the second phase of your personality.

The first phase of your personality is the conscious mind, the upper mind of your brain. From here you pass on to the second phase of your personality, the subconscious mind, the astral body. In Indian philosophy this is known as the subtle body. This subtle body is made up of impressions, memories, inheritance, forgotten experiences and those who believe in previous lives say that the subconscious mind, the subconscious personality, the subconscious accumulation contains a store of the previous lives also. Therefore, when you go to the second phase of your personality you see a great many things and you are able to know the complexes and the errors which are working within you.

It is something like going into a storeroom and finding all the old things lying there and then you remove them

one by one. Unless you have this capacity of going to the second floor of your life, into the second dimension of your personality, it is not possible to know what mistakes or what errors are lurking there. In order to know the cause of your erroneous personality, or to understand the cause of the errors in the personality of your patient, you must either go to that subtle level of his personality or help him go there. Psychologists must understand that you have to find the cause, for when the cause is known then it can be removed.

Through yoga the cause of tension and unhappiness is removed, not partially, but it is removed as a whole. Yoga goes deeper than this, but I won't talk about that now. My only message is that my inspiration or my thoughts on yoga should help you, should stimulate you to make a deeper study of this subject. If possible, create a society or a group to discuss the scientific possibilities of yoga.



5

God-Realization and Modern Life

Vedanta Society, Chicago, USA

In this modern day and age even the latest scientific discoveries, technological progress and the well-organized social, political and economic institutions have failed to solve the individual's mental and spiritual problems. In fact the greater the progress our civilization makes the more our suffering seems to multiply. The more we get into the realm of matter, the more disquieted we become. Tranquilizers are used by increasingly large sections of societies, and suicidal cases and juvenile delinquencies are also showing a steep rise. We cannot even understand or face these horrible facts. When the plain truth is spoken, modern life is too much for us; we do not possess sufficient mental power and strength. We may have enormously increased the stock of our intellectual knowledge and extended it to cover the invisible realms, yet we remain totally ignorant of ourselves. The time has come for us to make a concrete effort in the direction of self-knowledge. Only when we have learned the method of going within ourselves may the annihilation of suffering in toto be within our easy reach.

To combat sorrow, agony and suffering, we have to discover their root cause in our deeper level of consciousness. How can we do this?

There is a definite method by which you can discover the cause and acquaint yourself with its contents. We know from our metaphysical studies that the root cause of all our problems, on any level, is *avidya* or ignorance. The great spiritual individuals, who had acquired and mastered the technique of penetrating into the deeper layers of the mind, also testify that ignorance is the main cause of our maladies.

Our rishis and munis experimented throughout their lives. In fact, during the entire history of Indian culture, there has been a long and unceasing effort to discover and popularize the method by which the endless and agonized sufferings of mankind may be annihilated, but man has, in the main, overlooked their dictates, often misunderstood their appeal.

You may have made some studies in Vedanta of the various categories such as the reality, homogeneous consciousness, maya, avidya, illusion and the so-called appearances, but surely it is far more important to know the method by which one gains first-hand knowledge of them. Is it enough to have mere intellectual comprehension of the truth as recorded in the Upanishads?

There are, broadly speaking, two ways of acquiring knowledge. One is indirect and mediate in which senses, mind and intellect act as media. The other type of knowledge is direct and immediate. It is transcendental in nature for it is knowing through being. Here, the services of the intermediary media such as mind are put aside and the subject has direct contact with the object.

For a long time scholars of Vedanta have been following that path of Vedanta which consists of listening and contemplating, and they have confined themselves to the intellectual level only, their convictions regarding the identity of the Supreme never penetrating beyond the intellect. As such they were often victimized by their personal sufferings.

In spite of all the bold assertions I make about the divinity of the soul, when I look at the world with its difficulties, the odds and trials which have become an integral

part of our life, I find them hard to come to terms with. There is light, but it is a flickering light. I shall illustrate this with a parable. It was a dark night and the disciple was afraid. The guru lit a match. There was light, and the disciple was calm and quiet. The match burnt out and again there was darkness. The disciple was again afraid and another was lit which brought him temporary light and he was calm, quiet and fearless while it lasted. Again darkness came and so it continued till morning when, in the sunlight, there was no fear of recurring darkness.

In the same way, our intellectual knowledge, the bold assertions we make give us flickering light like that of a match and bestow only momentary peace and calmness. It is the permanent source of light we have to discover so that we can understand the difficulties we face and make ourselves strong in society, in the family, in economic and political life, so that we can face adversity with dignity, courage and complete understanding.

To achieve this, it is yoga we must turn to. It is a practical method, not so much to be learned, as to become a way of life. Not to be practised for hours and hours together, for even a little yoga practice brings relief, but yoga must be understood fundamentally, and not just as the practice of asanas and pranayama. I am not against the asanas and pranayama. Please do not misunderstand me, they are very good. They help the body, they bring about calmness in the system and regulate the glandular secretions. They constitute a wonderful science that our ancestors discovered, but they are not the whole of yoga.

Also, yoga must not be misunderstood as solely the development of psychic faculties, where the subconscious mind is brought in contact with the conscious mind and the arts like telepathy, clairvoyance and clairaudience are acquired. I do not say these are not yoga, but they are only a part of yoga. Our problem is human suffering, and here we must make a plain statement, for unless we realize our own self, not the lower self but the Supreme Self, in

the depth of meditation, by withdrawing our awareness temporarily from all forms of the outer dimensions and external experiences, it is not possible for us to go beyond suffering. And it is yoga that lifts you right from the conscious, subconscious and unconscious, and leads you to the realm of superconsciousness. You may call it samadhi, or God realization, or nirvana or whatever you like, but there is an individual, personal state of awareness which is all-expansive.

A certain problem has been in my mind lately which I have spent much time thinking about. Animals move on an instinctive plane; they react instinctively and they are not aware of what they are doing. However, the human being has the faculty of awareness, which he does not use, for like the animals, he generally lives on the instinctive plane. We move, but we do not know we are moving. We must leave the instinctive plane and make use of the faculty of awareness which is the special gift to the human being. We must learn to live on the plane of awareness.

This awareness, which manifests itself the moment we are born as human beings, is termed 'jnanam'. Jnanam is not mere knowledge, but awareness. We are aware of what we are doing, what we are thinking what we did and what we shall do. We are aware of the fact that we are alive. If I had the time, and if this were the mode of my sadhana, of my spiritual practice, then I might sit the whole day and sing the fact that 'I am', and be aware that I am. We should intensify this awareness which has just evolved in the human being and the duration of this awareness must increase. Whatever we do, we should do it with complete awareness. Yoga is a method by which we can develop this type of awareness to such a degree that eventually this awareness is completely separated from body awareness.

Now I am aware that I am talking about yoga. I am aware that this awareness is united with body awareness, with mind awareness and sense awareness. When I know that I am, I am also aware that I have a body. The awareness is not

purified, it is not non-sensory awareness. It is awareness, but sense awareness. It is awareness, but physical awareness. It is awareness, there is no doubt about it. Now, this awareness should be separated from gross consciousness step by step, stage by stage, point by point. And this awareness should remain intact and keep on expanding. All these elements – physical, sensory, mental and psychic, must be removed from the body. In this, yoga is a process of purification. It is an act of separation by which we separate the non-self elements from this atman. This awareness is *atman* – it is unaggravated, it is always homogeneous, it is always true, it is always eternal, it is always unchanging, and it is in me, in you and in all things.

Switch your awareness for a moment from me to yourself and think, “I am aware that I am listening to a discourse.” Now separate this fraction of awareness, which is not complete in itself, and which is not pure, but is tainted and mixed with mental awareness, from other forms of awareness and from other disturbances. We can keep on eliminating all those foreign elements which have, through habit, become part and parcel of our pure awareness by practising *viveka*, or discrimination, *yama* and *niyama*, or regulations and self-disciplines, *pratyahara* or withdrawal, by *dharana* and *dhyana* or by any yogic practice. Stage by stage the mind becomes intensified and is made introverted through concentration and meditation.

There are different techniques for achieving this, like repetition of a mantra, concentration on a symbol, devotion, prayers, serving humanity with absolute unselfishness, serving a guru or following the path of knowledge. You may choose any path, *raja yoga*, *bhakti yoga*, *karma yoga* or *jnana yoga*. They all help to free this atman from the lower turmoils, but unless the personality is purified and made free from its burdens and tensions, it is not possible to go into deep meditation. Lately there have been different spiritual movements which claim that meditation is very easy, but yoga is not as easy as is generally thought.

Through karma yoga we purify the heart and this brings mental peace. By bhakti yoga, the yoga of devotion, we bring about a spontaneous state of consciousness which is otherwise very difficult to acquire for the lay practitioner. With that concentration we move on to raja yoga. In raja yoga you penetrate deeper and deeper, and become free from physical awareness and sense experience, and finally merge with your own self, but all this is not as easy as people think.

When we sit for meditation we find it very difficult because the spinal cord does not remain erect. The lotus posture becomes difficult to maintain. We want to practice meditation in an easy chair and, when we do, sleep overtakes us. We also want to do meditation on a chair with our legs down, but this obstructs the flow of magnetic currents which are created through yogic practices, the flow of blood decreases in the spinal area and the centres of gravity are shifted. One can meditate on a chair, but then these obstructions will inevitably arise and they will have to be removed through hatha yoga, asanas and pranayama. Or when we sit for meditation, inertia or lethargy (tamoguna) overpowers us. The moment we reach the point of concentration, unification of thoughts, either we land in the realm of visions or we sleep, which is often mistaken for samadhi. Or if you are asked to hold a form or an image in the mind, you begin to disagree on a religious basis, but let us not talk about these things. During meditation the light within will be your proper guide. It will carry your consciousness further and further and it will indicate whether you have slipped into tamoguna, or inertia, or whether you are going in the right direction.

In raja yoga, the yoga of meditation, for finding the source of atman, your deepest and highest and eternal being, you will have to first shake off the temptation of psychic powers. You must not mind when I say this in all sincerity and with a little experience at my command. You must set them aside for they represent your greatest temptation

and often they can bring you much suffering. This is what happens to most yoga aspirants, from fire to frying pan and again from frying pan to fire. It is true that most people take to yoga solely to achieve psychic powers and they become a medium or practise telepathy and other arts. This is all right, but Rishi Patanjali in his *Yoga Sutras* considers that psychic powers are hindrances in the path of God-realization for they make the mind restless. So, one must put aside desire for these psychic powers.

Yoga is similar to hypnotism until it reaches the point of dharana. An aspirant of hypnotism undergoes a process whereby his consciousness diminishes until it is completely overtaken by a state of hypnotism, but the aspirant of yoga widens his frontiers of consciousness. His consciousness assumes the form of a symbol, of a deity, a mantra of sound; these are known as ishta devata. Whatever the symbol, essentially there is consciousness only. This consciousness keeps on expanding spontaneously. Theoretically speaking, you cannot expand your consciousness because it is eternal and infinite, and I am only using the expression to try to help you understand. Rather, it is an act of unveiling avidya, which was covering the consciousness. Then the clouds disperse, the sun begins to shine. This does not mean the sun was not shining before when it was covered by cloud. Exactly in the same way, your consciousness, atman, universal self, Brahman, or however you call it, is infinite. It has ever been infinite. Like the sun, its infinitude was temporarily veiled by the clouds of avidya and, when avidya disappears, the infinitude of atman manifests.

Meditation is only an act of eliminating the layers upon layers of avidya. It is only an act of lifting – this is how you proceed along the path of dharana. In dharana you retain a form of consciousness within you and do not allow that form of consciousness to disappear from your mind. So, eventually, by this act of holding the consciousness, all other dissimilar forms fall away, whilst the original form always remains. Then it shines in all its infinite glory and the

infinite state of samadhi dawns. This is possible through the practice of yogic techniques.

Once this state of samadhi has been reached, through the systematic methods of an integral yoga, and the layers of avidya are completely eliminated, you can still lead a practical life. You can be a family man, you can remain a technician or an industrialist; you may not possess miraculous powers or be a healer, but you will personally be the happiest man on the face of the earth. At the same time, your personality, your presence, your advice, thought currents and your blessings will enable other people to overcome suffering and achieve everlasting happiness. It is a state of nectar, it is a state of immortality, but from the point of utility, we must understand that God-realization is a necessity of our life. We are born with the purpose to realize God, and unless God-realization becomes our aim, our sufferings have no end and the health of society will not improve, even if it has great prosperity or the most highly developed political order.

In this great country yoga is coming with terrific speed, with the same speed with which prosperity came. When I came to America I immediately felt the thirst, the aspiration, the craving and I was especially conscious of how much the spiritual nature of man, which is eternal, is suffering from the instinctive greed for prosperity and materialism. It is not that Americans are becoming less spiritual. No, they are rediscovering their spirituality. It was there before, it is there in the present and it shall continue to exist. Once prosperity comes and man lives in abundance, his thirst for spirituality begins to make itself felt, and now is the right time in your country for the spiritual movement to grow. The industrial movement is now giving way to a spiritual movement and this spiritual movement will bring an era of enlightenment and supreme knowledge.

6

Yoga – Pathway to the New Age

KP Hall Spiritual Church, Indianapolis, USA

There are many things in life about which we are not very clear and sometimes we are so diffident that we feel that we, as ordinary mortals, may not be able to understand the great mysteries of life. Behind the physical body of man there is another body which is very wonderful and very powerful. In man it is generally dormant, it does not manifest, but that dormant body or consciousness can be brought into operation.

We should think of this physical body as a vehicle. It can be driven either instinctively, as an animal functions, or it can be driven by the intellect. It can also be driven by psychic forces, the power behind so many of the great men in the world. Man, as an animal, has evolved towards this potentiality or higher consciousness, from an instinctive animal, to the intellectual being he is today. The most powerful faculty in man is his mind, his intellect, but an even higher intelligence, a great force can manifest through every person. This higher intelligence, this higher power is not a thing apart from him. It is a deeper, subtler plane of his own existence. Just as the mind is more subtle than the body, the spirit is more subtle than the psyche. There are grades or levels of consciousness. People are physically conscious through the different mediums of perception,

the eyes and the ears, but when physical consciousness is withdrawn another consciousness becomes manifested. When this occurs, man becomes more powerful and his faculties are sharper. His physical body, or this consciousness, becomes the medium through which that over-power, superpower, or higher power manifests.

The main theme of the Upanishads, ancient Indian scriptures, is this hidden, underlying consciousness in man; the all-pervading, ever-present, all-powerful but dormant consciousness in man. This consciousness is transcendental in the sense that it transcends all the different levels of consciousness in our mind and body. It lies somewhere beyond the reach of our ordinary gross knowledge. Surely there is a way to pass through this gross body to the deeper levels of consciousness. Surely it is possible for us to commune with that underlying fundamental consciousness in man, that supreme state, the supreme intelligence or God. It is discovered within the inner self and the method the conscious mind uses to commune with the superconscious is known as yoga. Yoga of course is a broad category. It includes, among others, hatha, raja and bhakti yoga and transcendental meditation, which recently took the West by storm and has brought the world of yoga to everyone's door.

In India, yoga has been practised by rich and poor alike for centuries. It is not a terribly difficult process. It is a system which consists of many hundreds of methods of 'going in' to the inner awareness from external awareness, the realm of gross experience and outer perceptions. There are so many ways. The choice depends upon temperament, capacities, limitations, comprehension and, last but not least, the amount of effort put into the practices. The reason for so many methods is to accommodate all the different kinds of minds. One man on closing his eyes may spontaneously go in, as simply as that, while another may find the moment he closes his eyes the mind becomes full of disturbing thoughts which dissipate the meditation.

These different techniques one should know and understand. They should be learned from someone who has direct intimate knowledge and experience of them, who can teach the aspirant correctly and lead him safely through the deeper practices later on. Meditation is the method used to go deep into inner awareness and, through meditation, the underlying consciousness becomes ignited, illuminated and from its dormant state made active. Once this process starts it keeps on growing, expanding, and eventually the aspirant becomes fully aware – he becomes the medium to his higher self.

Everybody, even in ordinary gross awareness, is a medium, a medium of the gross consciousness. You are the medium of your mind, your intellect, your emotions, your feelings and your sensations. For instance, the mind might tell you to go to the movies and you obey what it says. Are you therefore not its medium? You are obedient to the mind. Your will, desires, ambitions, aspirations, animosities and passions express themselves through the medium of the physical body. On a higher level, if you develop spiritually through the path of yoga, your body and mind remain the same, but a higher state of consciousness, a higher form of intelligence which comes into being will act through you using your mind and body as a medium. As such, yoga is really a way to achieve independence by evolving your higher personality, which makes the body its medium. The body becomes a channel through which the supreme power flows.

Which are the various yogic methods which can bring this inner freedom about? One of these is pranayama, breathing techniques. It has been known in the West for quite some time, but only treated as part of hatha yoga, as breathing exercises to put more oxygen into the physical body and to strengthen the lungs. Now, scientific experiments have proved that pranayama activates certain brain cells. These dormant cells in the brain, these centres of higher power can be ignited, stimulated and can be made to function through pranayama. Asanas and pranayama should not be practised

for health benefits alone, as in the past when they were done with an eye to slimming the waist, for weight reduction, to help a sinus condition, an ulcer or perhaps asthma. Now we know from scientific investigation that the lotus pose, headstand, shoulderstand and other asanas are exercises for the development of psychic awareness. These investigations have shown that the postures affect the brain and the central nervous system. So pranayama, as well as being a breathing exercise beneficial to the heart, lungs, kidneys and other body organs, simultaneously affects psychic awareness in man to such a degree that a latent part of the brain begins to function, and millions and millions of psychic brain cells are activated. In this way asanas and pranayama hasten the evolution of grey matter. Grey matter is continually changing just as all matter makes changes through an evolutionary process. Man has evolved through making physical changes to adapt to his environment, but to evolve psychically he should practise yoga.

This fact was proved by an experiment in 1966 or '67 by the Soviets. An article concerning the manifestation of psychic abilities was published in a civil aviation magazine. Russian scientists conducted a test using a narcotic drug known in India as ganja. Its counterpart in America is marijuana. Their research concerned the effect of ganja on the brain and it was discovered that, when the subject was intoxicated on the drug and completely relaxed and removed from his problems, his psychic faculties came into operation. So when the brain became completely relaxed through ganja, the subject would develop ESP. The important point here is that the brain, in a relaxed state, manifests its psychic faculties. So if you can achieve complete relaxation, the door to your inner psychic being opens. When emotions relax, when the mind relaxes and the physical body or conscious being relaxes, then the inner deeper personality is able to express itself, and this is what happens in meditation – various techniques are used solely to relax the brain.

These government controlled Russian scientists then invited a yogi from India who could achieve a similar state through yoga to participate. The yogi gave demonstrations of pranayama and asanas which were subjected to scientific investigation, and it was concluded that, as well as influencing the system of the body, pranayama also had a definite effect on the brain. Additionally, asanas not only affected and influenced the digestive system, the glandular system and the respiratory system, but the central nervous system as well.

When the category 'yoga' is used, what exactly is meant by it? Besides asanas and pranayamas, it includes many other practices such as mantra chanting and yoga nidra or psychic sleep, which is now becoming popular in the West. Yoga nidra is used for astral travelling, and sannyasins, sadhus and yogis in thousands practice this sleepless sleep or yoga nidra.

It is important to have a complete understanding of the whole yogic process. It is not too difficult to understand. Modern man finds it hard to believe in the psychic because right from his childhood he is taught not to believe in a higher reality, and so we are unable to conceptualize another dimension of reality. When a person dies, how can he continue to exist, for we can't see him with our microscopes and telescopes, the materialists say. Yet psychologists, parapsychologists and research scholars in the psychic sciences and higher sciences have concluded, in spite of opposition from the materialistic sciences, that there are phenomena deeper than the physical existence. The great rishis of India, as is apparent from the Upanishads, have always known this. They knew of the deeper levels of consciousness and the way to develop consciousness through yoga.

Yoga should not be practised all of a sudden; not that yoga is dangerous, for, with one or two exceptions, it is not, but the great danger lies in the use it is put to, for there are some who misuse psychic power to get money or reputation, although, especially in India, there are

many who put their psychic knowledge and powers gained through mantra to good use. These are the good mediums who make prophecies to help others. Therefore, before you start practising the practical esoteric science of yoga, you should go through a spiritual discipline to purify yourself – your whole philosophy, the basic concept of your life, your behaviour and your understanding. As long as you have hatred in your heart, you are going to hurt someone, but if you have love for all you will help the insecure, you will defend the unprotected. You must rid yourself of hostility, anger and jealousy. With love in your heart you are already on the yogic path. You will slowly become aware of your spiritual power. You possess it now, although you don't realize it. Everyone does.

According to yogic philosophy, before you can put your spiritual power to good use you must develop the spirit of service. This yoga is called karma yoga and the spirit of service means selflessness. Then you should practise bhakti yoga, the yoga of devotion, of faith, love and surrender to the Almighty so that, even if you develop tremendous powers, they will be in the service of the Lord. You must know that He is all-mighty and you are nothing, that it is his power functioning through you. In this way you do not become arrogant or stubborn, but remain humble. You must practise self-control and self-discipline according to your culture, status and country, and most important, according to your aim. Finally, you have to practise this higher philosophy, this sublime attitude in life. Only when this is achieved can you begin the practice of yoga.

There are many techniques in yoga, but inherent in them all is the objective of calming the mind so that it can develop psychic awareness. Every morning start practising awareness. Just be aware of yourself for one minute, five minutes or ten minutes. It is very difficult to maintain unbroken, continuous awareness for very long. Try to let nothing disturb this self-awareness. Let no form of consciousness break in between. For instance, I might be aware 'I am', and suddenly I am

aware a car passed by, so consciousness is broken. Or I think 'I am', and suddenly a thought of my parents comes, again a break. You can't help it, it's natural. It will take time, it may take weeks, months before your consciousness becomes continuous, constant, unceasing and before nothing interferes with its stream. You can do this practice any time, anywhere. At work, close your eyes and switch on to self-awareness, just for a moment or two. Maintain this awareness of 'I am' continuously and then go on with your work. Do this every two or three hours during the day.

Before going to work set aside some time, half an hour will do. First, do two or three asanas, then one or two pranayamas followed by your own mantra or prayer. Then do this practice of awareness, just awareness of consciousness. Don't worry about the distractions and dissipations. In the beginning, they will inevitably come.

Sometimes you will find even this practice to be impossible because the mind is so full of disturbances and you are unable to concentrate your mind and become aware of your own consciousness. If this happens practise breath awareness for five or ten minutes. Just breathe naturally and watch your own breath, and then return to awareness practice. Awareness practice is a very high practice, it is not elementary, and if at any time you find it too difficult, transfer to a preliminary practice. If you find that impossible, go to a still more elementary practice. This is the secret of succeeding in yoga.

The ultimate aim of yoga is to develop spiritual consciousness in man, whatever the practice used. Man has already developed his mental consciousness and his physical consciousness, and gradually he will come to develop his psychic consciousness. That era will come some day, but only very few of us are able to do this now. Surely those who do their practices faithfully will succeed. Man is transcending the mental plane. Mankind is slowly moving into the psychic era. That era is due. In the psychic era, people will operate on psychic planes. The physical body will become the

medium of the psyche as it is the medium of the intellect today. The great scientists operate from psychic levels. They have a kind of glimpse of intuition, and intuition is an even higher plane than the psyche. In the meantime we should develop ourselves in such a way that the inspiration may come both to ourselves and our fellow men to enter on to the spiritual path, and open the doors to the dawning of the psychic age, or what the young people call the Age of Aquarius, the golden age.



7

Yoga as a Process of Consciousness

Society of Psychical Research, New York, USA

When I speak about yoga, I speak about a definite process of consciousness development. When we realize that there is something more than this body and the senses, then the questions arise, what is this something more, how can we understand it? How can we come to know it? The technique by which we realize this deeper and greater faculty, and the processes which are taking place within our personality is known as yoga.

Here in the West, during the last three or four decades, yoga postures and breathing practices have become very common, and when we talk about yoga it is sometimes understood that the subject matter will only be on yoga postures and breathing exercises. However, yoga is a far greater science than this. It has much more to it than what has been brought to the West.

There is a raja yoga technique described by Rishi Patanjali known as *dhyana* or meditation. This meditation is a wonderful system enabling you to realize the various dimensions of consciousness and, with some practice, you can transcend the very concept of consciousness, and the superconscious state is realized. This meditation, or dhyana, is a very simple process, but one has to understand it correctly.

Using any meditation technique, you first try to comprehend the most basic level of consciousness. First, you must be able to comprehend one of the gross aspects of consciousness. Then you follow it up and withdraw the whole empirical consciousness to one point. This process is known as the negation of consciousness. Withdrawal of consciousness and purification of consciousness, and the bringing of consciousness right down to the empirical stage of no experience requires great meditational practice. It is a very difficult task, but only by this process of negation can we achieve psychic development. First, we must transcend sense experiences and then we must transcend the experiences of the mind, e.g. our recollection and reflections. Even the form and the mental mazes which develop spontaneously from within must be negated until we reach this one point. In yoga this is the path of psychic development.

To achieve success in this path, what should one know? What should one do? What are the difficulties and the complications? What are the special problems? Many people are psychic, gifted, clairvoyant or clairaudient. They can sense things, but this is not the yogic path. Yogis say the moment we draw our consciousness inside ourselves, clairvoyance spontaneously occurs. The more intensely you go within your consciousness, the more shadowy everything happening outside becomes. Your consciousness appears as a microcosmos, the counterpart of the macrocosmos. So, this psychic faculty that we can develop is a form of manifestation of the psyche. In fact, not all of us operate from the same point of psychic evolution; each consciousness operates from different levels of the psyche. No two people respond from exactly the same place or level of the psyche in any given situation.

The individual consciousness in man is known as awareness. This awareness is formless, it is immortal and does not die. It is continuous, but it is mixed up with sense awareness, body awareness and mind awareness. This awareness in every man is in the form of 'I am', but with the 'I am' awareness

comes the awareness 'I am a body', 'I am a man', 'I am an Indian' and so on. In yoga we try to purify this awareness from all such associations, for this awareness and the consciousness we want to achieve are the same. When you sit in meditation and look within, you'll see mental vibrations, mental forms in different dimensions belonging to the past, which represent your nature, and many things known and unknown to man. Then, in the next stage you must give a form to your consciousness and continue awareness of the particular form for a very long time. As awareness of the form continues the quality of it changes. This practice helps you to withdraw your consciousness from the outside world.

There are schools of meditation where meditation is practised without the use of a form, but the drawback of this meditation, which does without the aid of a form as support for the mind, is that the mind passes into a sort of suspension and the meditator is unable to know how far he has gone, and how far he has yet to go. It is for this reason that yoga uses a symbol, an image or a particular object as a base upon which the mind can rest, to which the consciousness can relate, or upon which the mind can concentrate. These forces of consciousness are dissipated inwardly and outwardly on the conscious and other planes in our ordinary life, but in yoga all the forces of individual consciousness become wrapped around one particular form, so that finally the formless consciousness of the individual, which is emanating in all the different dimensions of consciousness, tries to express itself in that one form only.

This practice also develops the instincts in our personality which are lying embedded in the deeper mires of consciousness. When you put all your consciousness into the one form and maintain awareness of that form of consciousness, you will find that numerous images rise up by the hundreds and thousands. These images represent different states of your personality, behaviour, impressions and many other things. The more you try to maintain the original form, the more these images will develop. They keep

on developing until you reach the stage in yoga where there is no image at all. This is known as the *drashta* mind. It is not an unconscious state, but absolute awareness.

In absolute consciousness, the particular symbol you have chosen for concentration of consciousness should remain the same with no change made at all. If it is a cross, it should remain a cross. If it is a triangle, it should remain a triangle. If it is *Om*, then it should remain *Om*.

During the process of the diminishing of the faculties of the senses, the mind and the understanding, it sometimes happens that the symbol changes colour or is seen with different backgrounds so that it may seem to be distorted. When you see the consciousness in the unconscious state, you remember the symbol, but you do not see it. Later on in your practice the object of your concentration will become very clear. It is as if the image is being painted on a wall. You can see it in colour and existing alongside is the awareness 'I am'. There is both awareness of the symbol and also this awareness 'I am'. This is called dual awareness which, in Indian philosophy, is termed *dwaita*, the notion of duality. There simultaneously exists awareness of the meditator and awareness of the object of meditation. This awareness can function in three parts, but it shouldn't happen.

Finally, you reach a stage where the object of your concentration seems to you as it really is and the awareness of the object of concentration is continuous; continuous in that nothing is allowed to interfere with it. When your awareness becomes continuous it is meditation, but when it is broken by second or third thoughts it is dissipation or destruction of meditation. If I take a flower, let us say a rose for my symbol, I keep thinking about the rose, but suddenly there may be a distraction of music. The consciousness is withdrawn and there is a break. This is called dissipation.

In this stage of meditation, the consciousness is not allowed to function freely. I am not talking about conscious concentration, but about deeper concentration, deeper than conscious concentration, when you are not even aware that

you exist and your conscious mind has ceased to operate. With practice you can draw the mind back from the different channels of distractions, back to the point of concentration where the mind no longer functions, where in that inner silence remains the object of consciousness, the *Om*, the cross, triangle or flower. In this state you don't know whether it is an object; you can't analyze it. This is because the faculty of analysis is not present. You only see, you visualize the flower or object.

The symbol is there, then perhaps it becomes shifted and a stream of visions, many visible and invisible things, symbols and memories of the past arise. Anything might emerge. It is this stage that is so difficult, for during conscious concentration, you possess the faculty of analysis. You know you are concentrating on the rose and if your mind is shifted inwards, you can bring it back to reality with ease. In deep meditation however, the faculty of conscious will is not present and consciousness is shifted from the triangle, or cross, or from any other symbol, to such a riot of visions and experiences. You cannot bring the consciousness back, and if it doesn't come back, the visions are endless.

This is one of the hardest problems to tackle. All sorts of solutions have been tried, but only one works and this is: as you proceed along the path of concentration, to systematically break the concentration. The breaks must be systematic and also an integral part of your concentration. For this purpose we use a mala or rosary. When we do meditation of a particular kind we try to change our consciousness every seven to ten minutes. Suppose I try to withdraw my consciousness by a particular method, let us say by rhythmic motion in the brain, within say seven minutes the consciousness should reverse itself. Concentration should go back and begin again at the original point. This practice is of great importance, for if the mind is in a deep dimension and dissipations occur, it is brought back again and again to that one point. In this way one does not lose the stream of consciousness.

At a later stage in meditation, when you are following your consciousness in the form of a symbol and the awareness of it is becoming deeper and deeper, another difficulty might arise – unconsciousness. Of course this is dynamic unconsciousness, but it needs careful treatment. Yogis say that spiritual practices should never be continued to the point of unconsciousness and that, before unconsciousness is reached, one must switch on to the expansion of consciousness. So, to recapitulate, first you have negation of consciousness and, when that is achieved, you can go ahead with expansion of consciousness.

Spiritual practices relating to expansion of consciousness are completely different, and no one has come back from the experience and written a book about it, because it is not a matter for books. You can't expand your own consciousness by reading novels about it. Expansion of consciousness takes place under different conditions.

Psychic development may take place in an individual during the beginning stages of yoga, but in fact nearly all of the yoga practices known to us both in the East and West tend to negate consciousness, whether it is mantra practice, the negation of consciousness through pranayamas or other yogic disciplines. These practices immediately withdraw your consciousness; empirical consciousness and sense consciousness are withdrawn simultaneously. Only then can psychic development take place in the individual.

8

Yoga and Relaxation

A detention camp, Boston, USA

Yoga is the practical system for the relaxation of tensions. Modern psychology defines three types of tensions and these are responsible for the agonies in human life. These are the muscular, mental and emotional tensions. Tensions cause disease, inhibitions, complexes and neurosis. Anxiety and many other states associated with suffering are also due to these three types of tensions. Without tension there is no suffering, but no one can help suffering if he possesses tension. Many people think that tensions are caused by a fatigue of a blockage process of the energy in the system, a kind of muscular or mental blockage.

We will discuss this topic scientifically and take the case history of a patient suffering from mental troubles. His case was studied by a team of scientists. Electro-encephalogram investigations revealed that there was no tension in the brain, yet the man said he could not sleep at night and he entirely lacked appetite. As a result of the investigation the scientists felt that he had no ailment, but the man felt differently. He was then taken to a psychologist and his entire personality was analyzed. Ultimately it was found that an incident in his life when he was a baby had penetrated so deep into his mind, that at the age of thirty-five he had begun to suffer from the

emotional tension it caused. This is an example of an emotional disorder.

There are tensions which are physical, those which are mental and those which are emotional, but emotional tensions are especially terrible tensions and they are tensions which no man can remove. Emotional tensions cannot even be removed by yogic methods, neither by pranayama, nor by asanas, nor by meditation. Emotional tensions can only be cured if the patient undergoes a process of reorientation.

Suppose a man receives a telegram telling him that his wife or son has been killed. He is shocked and cannot resist the effects of the shock. He cannot master the shock. He cannot come to terms with it. It creates tensions passing from one part of his body to the other. It effects his nervous systems, his brain, his respiration and oxygen consumption. He feels all kinds of pain throughout his body. He suffers from loss of appetite and other troubles.

The change, the reorientation, is made through wisdom. The word wisdom is known as *jnana* and in yoga it is called *jnana yoga*, which is the yoga of understanding, of analytical understanding, not intellectual understanding – understanding through a changed mind. When you have understanding resulting from a changed mind, then death, failure, insult, any complication in life, family disaster, heavy bills which you cannot pay, will not affect you.

Man is too sensitive. He has a magnifying glass in his hand and it is only through this magnifying glass that man sees the events of life. I mean he dreams over them, he broods over them and any insignificant thought becomes an obsession. We can become obsessed by the idea of suffering, by the idea of want, by the idea of friendship. Our mind, our personality, our consciousness receives all that happens like a camera, develops it inside and enlarges it according to its capacity and then man suffers the agonies.

How can we learn to relax and to become freed from the effects of nature? This is the subject matter of yoga. Real yoga, higher yoga, makes one unaffected by any shock,

any blow and their effects. When a man achieves this inner freedom we do not call him a relaxed man, we call him a liberated man. Such a man is *jivanmukta*, the liberated man, the free man, the man who is master of the senses, to whom success does not bring elation and failure does not bring depression. You may criticize him or praise him, you may pay him money or take money from him; whatever you do makes no difference to him. This method of inner freedom, of relaxation of emotional tension, is a very difficult part of yoga.

How does the yogi help you? If you tell a yogi, “Three months ago my wife had a baby, but today we have lost him, and we are in a very bad emotional state,” he will not advise asanas and pranayama. He knows that local treatment, partial treatment, treatment of symptoms only will not be of much use, because he knows the mind of man is not strong, and such measures as hypnotism will only give temporary relief. Life is a series of ups and downs, pains and pleasures, births and deaths, the wanted and unwanted. As such, if you are given peace for one month through hypnotic methods, what is going to happen if something else occurs? You have rid yourself of one shock, but another follows. Again you might seek peace of mind through hypnotic methods or some other process. A third shock comes. How long will you go on treating your symptoms only? Why not develop strength of mind? Why not develop strength of personality? The yogi can change your way of life, your way of thinking, your way of reacting to events in life, your way of acting in any given circumstance. With this discipline behind you, you can face everything in life like a hero. This yoga is *jnana* yoga.

A *jnana* yogi tries to develop right understanding and to make his mind strong. He analyzes all that happens in life. He does not understand death as death, birth as birth, pain as pain, pleasure as pleasure, defeat as defeat or victory as victory. He says, “Victory, defeat, loss, gain, prosperity, poverty, wealth, health, death, birth; all these are

only changing conditions, these are only mental concepts. This is only how the mind looks at them, appreciates them and assimilates them.” Happiness and sadness are only the outcome of your way of thinking, of your relationship to things. For this reason, the yogi of right and true understanding tries to analyze these mental effects as an impartial witness. First, he must correct his mind. You are in constant contact with people all day long. How do you interact with them, what are your reactions? It is in our relationships with people that tensions are accumulated and it is also here that tensions can be relaxed. From learning how to relate with people you can become a *jivanmukta*, you can become liberated.

The threefold tensions are the root cause of all suffering and, if you have any suffering, you need not go to a yogi, you need not go to anybody, you can find the solutions yourself. You have a brain, mind, intellect, you can think. Ask yourself this one question daily, “Am I happy or unhappy?” Do not try to deceive yourself. If you are unhappy, accept it, if you are happy, boldly declare it to yourself.

How can you know whether you are happy or otherwise? A man who is completely contented, he is happy, but a man who is always complaining can never be happy. He may assert he is happy, but complaints are only symptoms of dissatisfaction and discontent, which are the indicators of unhappiness.

If you think you are unhappy then discover the cause of this unhappiness. Is it due to your wrong attitude about your children or your wrong attitude about society? Is it due to your wrong notion, your wrong understanding about yourself, too much humility, too much arrogance, too much inferiority, too much superiority or too much obstinacy? In this way your analysis must proceed. You will have to analyze your personality. I don't mean the physical personality; this can be analyzed by looking in the mirror. I mean your emotional personality, the personality of feelings, the personality of thoughts, the personality of sensitivity, the

personality which experiences pain, the personality which loves and the personality which hates. The man in you who appreciates beauty and who hates – look at that man and see if he is sick. It may be he is as sick as someone suffering from a physical disorder like leprosy, cancer or TB.

In spite of prosperity, in spite of all our comforts, in spite of the best education, in spite of everything we have in modern society, materially there is nothing which we do not have; emotionally we are very poor. On the emotional level we have illness, derangement and disorganisation, but by the development of yogic personality, your whole being becomes so strong that nothing in life can influence you. You will feel completely free of all tension and suffering.

In yoga, there are methods for treating the different kinds of tensions which I shall enumerate briefly. For instance bhakti yoga should be practised for exhaustion and sublimation of emotional complexes. Karma yoga develops the personality and brings about a total reintegration. Raja yoga is for mental discipline. Jnana yoga helps us to analyze our personality and leads to self-realization.

I shall now discuss bhakti yoga and its purpose. The philosophy of bhakti is that every man is essentially emotional and that each of us distributes this emotional treasure to others, whether it be the mother, father, wife, husband, friends or nation, but each of us has so much love in him that, even after giving love to all the above, he still has an excess of love. Or it may be we find we are unable to love anybody, but we always want to love somebody, we want to love more and more people, even if there comes a slump, a dullness in love, for we may get a shock in love, because another does not receive or respond to our love properly.

The philosophy of bhakti yoga can be put like this. A river is flowing to fill up a big pond, but when it is full, the pond overflows. In the same way, you want to give much love to all, but they are unable to receive so much love, so your love overflows and this overflow of love causes emotional disorder and anarchy in your system. Therefore, bhakti

yoga suggests all your surplus love should be directed to God because God's capacity is infinite. When you turn your love to God and channel all your emotions to him, you will discover that your entire emotional personality, your entire capacity for love can be consumed or assimilated by that infinite being. As such, those people who have loved somebody other than God have always been unhappy. This psychology we call the love complex or the emotional complex in human life.

We should practise in our lives all the four yogas – karma yoga, bhakti yoga, raja yoga, jnana yoga, for then you can become free from the threefold tensions.

Physical tensions are removed by asanas and pranayama. It has been proved scientifically these bring about a complete relaxation in the system.

Recent scientific research has brought one very fundamental fact into the limelight, and this is the importance of the endocrine glands and their effects on the human mind, on human behaviour and on human emotions. Do you know the endocrine glands? These are the thyroid, pancreas, pituitary, pineal, thymus, adrenals and sex glands. They are called ductless glands. Today scientists have the theory that if a man suffers from too much anger there is something wrong with his glands or if a man is too introverted then probably some of his glands are over developed. Endocrine glands have effects on human action, human behaviour and human thinking. So, if you are angry, always angry, or if you are too emotional, or if you think too much, or sleep too much, or worry too much or are too self-conscious, it may be possible there is some kind of fault in the system of the endocrine glands.

In India, in an effort to control the population, they began giving a particular operation called vasectomy. Vasectomy is an operation in which the sex glands in the lower part of the abdomen, called the viscera, are cut and the male hormones are removed, so that he becomes incapable of causing pregnancy. Vasectomy was given for two or three years. In each case there was a sudden change

in the behaviour of the man. The growth of his moustache might stop, or he became very submissive and his behaviour effeminate. Some began to develop palpitations of the heart and doctors became very upset by these reactions. This incident clearly shows how direct an effect the hormones have on thinking and behaviour.

There are six or seven basic asanas which have a beneficial effect on endocrine secretions. For instance siddhasana affects the sex secretions, sarvangasana the thyroid gland and halasana the pancreatic and adrenal secretions.

If you suffer from mental tensions, meditation can also help you. When you think too much, your brain gets over-worked and shakes from the over-activity. In meditation the activity of the brain is controlled and the brain becomes still, but when it is thinking, it makes movements of contraction and expansion. The moment you begin meditation the brain becomes quiet, modulation also stops and you conserve a lot of energy that you usually waste in useless thoughts.

Your brain is like an electronic battery which loses its charge. It gets run down through unnecessary thinking, but it can be recharged through meditation. When the brain slows down during meditation, this electrical charging takes place. When a yogi goes into concentration, his brain stops sending brainwaves and the temperature of the brain rises, for it becomes charged with energy. There is a sound in our brain which is like humming; it is constantly there, but in meditation it becomes calm and quiet. Also, in meditation the different nerves of the body, the channels that carry the blood, that carry thoughts, feelings and sensations, all of them are cut off. The different centres are completely disconnected from the brain and this is very refreshing.

Yoga is a very comprehensive term which includes asanas, pranayama, mysticism, meditation, selfless activity, surrender to the supreme power, experiencing of superconsciousness and the awakening of mental powers and capacities. The cause of the suffering that humanity is experiencing is tension, and everyone is suffering consciously or uncon-

sciously. This suffering can only come to an end when you make yourself free from tension, and the way to make yourself free from tension is to learn yoga. Through asana and pranayama practice you maintain sound health, and through selfless service you can exhaust your vasanas and karma. Through devotion and self-surrender you stabilize your emotions. Through mental control you increase your mental efficiency; through self-analysis and enquiry you sharpen your discriminative faculty and through meditation you expand your consciousness. Thus, all your layers of personality are properly developed and you become an integrated personality. This is the main task of yoga.



9

A Spiritual Revolution

Press Interview, Philadelphia, USA

I have been visiting many centres, universities and churches between San Francisco and New York, and it seems to me the people of this country need a definite spiritual practice which will enable them to evolve spiritually. I don't merely mean practice which is grounded in psychological tranquillity. What I have in mind is yoga which operates at the deepest level of the human psyche.

The people of the West are very spiritually advanced. Transcendental meditation, as taught by Maharishi Yogi, is too primary and general for westerners. He is only teaching the method of tranquillity. He seems to have misunderstood the spiritual potential of this country and, just because we see a westerner dressed up in costly clothes and apparently only caring for materialism, we should not think he is ignorant about spiritual life. When Maharishi Yogi first offered his transcendental meditation it didn't much appeal to western people, but when the Beatles came onto the scene people began to think, perhaps there was something more to transcendental meditation. Because the Beatles were interested it automatically became fashionable. When the Beatles adopted it, you and I began to be interested and think in terms of transcendental meditation. In that big fever created immediately after the Beatles' initiation,

hundreds and thousands of people took to transcendental meditation.

Most people who were drawn to transcendental meditation already had some kind of preliminary spiritual knowledge; some had a Christian background or a background of Swami Vivekananda's teachings. Oh, so many swamis – Swami Vivekananda, Swami Yogananda, Swami Sivananda had been here and had already sown a very potential seed in people's minds. They soon realized that it was not the proper system for them and, the next time Maharishi Yogi came, they thought he was not teaching anything beyond what they knew already. For this reason the Beatles and many others left the fold of transcendental meditation.

It was as if I had come to you and had offered to teach you asanas and pranayama, but you were not interested because you already knew them, unless you didn't already know them when you came to me. So what Maharishi Yogi started teaching in America was not advanced enough for this country because already, in the 19th century, it had been initiated into the highest Indian philosophy by Swami Vivekananda on the eve of the conference of the Parliament of Religion, held in Chicago during the World Fair in 1898. Swami Vivekananda initiated a large number of people and it had much publicity and propaganda throughout the world. Within five years of that Parliament of Religion in Chicago, dozens of Vedanta centres had been created and opened. There are Vedanta centres in Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Berkeley and throughout America. All these belong to the order of Ramakrishna Paramahansa. So this country received initiation into the highest philosophy scholars ever conceived. How then can transcendental meditation possibly impress the American public?

Swami Vivekananda came to the conference in 1898. There were more than 10,000 people present, including a great cardinal. It had convened because the Catholics wanted

to give more emphasis to the Catholic religion since America was becoming increasingly Protestant. On the seventh day, Swami Vivekananda was given ten minutes to speak and the audience was so spellbound that for ten minutes after there was pandemonium in the whole show. People even threw their hats in the air. They were hypnotized by him. After that historic occasion, he gave classes and lectures and toured throughout America for several months.

Then Swami Yogananda came and settled in Los Angeles, where he established the Self-Realization Fellowship centres. Now his disciple Sister Dayamata, an American lady, is taking care of this very large institute. Another swami, Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh, a great soul, has hundreds and thousands of his disciples here in America. I too am one. Swami Vishnudevananda in Montreal, Canada, is another swami with a very large following.

America is spiritually enlightened. It needs a guru of high quality who is scholarly, deep, energetic and at the same time full of liberal thoughts. America's political philosophy is one of liberty, freedom, and so its spiritual philosophy should also be liberty and freedom, for America is so vast and is composed of so many different nationalities. America has the same human weaknesses found everywhere – restlessness, greed, jealousy, but America has an advantageous position because it has become so prosperous, and when there is an abundance of prosperity, the mind becomes spiritual. Poverty begets communism and prosperity begets spiritualism, and now in this country frustration and a spiritual vacuum are being felt, especially by young people. They don't know which way to go or which way to turn. The mood now of young people is to escape from prosperity and materialism. We have the movement of hippies who are leaving society. They are unable to stand the stress, the economic pressure, the compulsions, the modern orthodoxy. Even in the so-called freedom they find that there is absolute bondage, financially and economically, rules, etiquette, disciplines;

everywhere they are bound. There seems to be only one solution. The whole atmosphere of the country must be changed and made conducive to the spiritual development of the new generation. If the next generation is spoiled, the whole country will go down the drain, for they are the citizens of tomorrow.

A spiritual revolution has already taken place and the industrial revolution is now ending. I am witnessing it with my own eyes, I see it in the classes, in the revival of the church, in the books that are being printed. I see it in the television programmes. Everywhere I find people with a spiritual tendency. I talk to them, I see their minds, I observe the way psychology is going. Thinkers like Aldous Huxley and many others are talking about a superman, a race of supermen and a new era, a time that is to come.

So a revolution is evident; it has already happened. The hippie movement includes thousands and thousands of young people. They are taking to the psychedelic methods. Hundreds and hundreds of Americans, Christians are singing ecstatically for hours together – they dance to spiritual music. Why do they do it? It means the change is taking place.

Concerning the psychedelic and the whole drug question, this cannot be helped, because when society does not allow spiritual freedom, man only tries to discover spiritual freedom elsewhere. Society gives him complete freedom to take alcohol, but he knows it is not good for him so he tries something else and he gets into psychedelic drugs. This is how human nature works. Once he knows there is a spiritual state beyond, he will give up these drugs. There are many thousands of people who have given up the drugs, who are leading a life of purity and meditation. If you ask them, “How did you come to this path?” they will say, “Because we took drugs.” This is how they came to know that there could be a spiritual state. LSD seems to be the path opener. It opens up the path. Therefore, while not encouraging it, we should not wholly condemn it.

This movement of drug taking and the uprising degree of violence are indicative of the same revolution, spiritual or otherwise. The cause of both drug taking and violence is the restless, hypersensitive mind. If your mind is hypersensitive and tense and I speak something which appears to be against you, whether it is or not, in your hypersensitive state you feel it is against you and you get furious, you suddenly take to violence. It is a mental error. It is due to the condition of society today. Our society has been mismanaged; everybody is experiencing tension and in this tense condition, when man is unable to make proper decisions, he is provoked to do something.

There are many types of people. Some have reached the second stage of evolution, the stage of non-passivity. It is these people who will revolt; not all of them will, but they cannot remain passive, they must act. Everybody possesses a different cast of mind. Some are quiet, some are conservative, whilst a few have a revolutionary mind. It is the revolutionary mind which rejects society. There are reasons for all of us in our lives to reject society, but somehow our temperaments are cast in such a pattern that we don't. Either we humbly bow down and submit to the situations of life, maybe we are not aware of what is taking place, or some of us are over-conscious and reject society. It is not a case of right or wrong; they do it because they possess a particular temperament.

Questions from a radio reporter

Reporter: Is yoga a kind of religion?

Swamiji: No, because it is a science. It is not a religion at all. It is a complement to religion. It is not contradictory to religion.

Reporter: I am not saying it is contradictory to religion, but it tends to keep people from going to church.

Swamiji: I think people who practice yoga and go to church will now understand why they go to church. They will have a better understanding of Christ and what is meant by Christ

consciousness. They know what the Holy Ghost or the Holy Spirit is. Before taking up yoga they had no idea because they had no experiences, but now they know. Religion you get from your parents, who say that there is one God, and this and that about virtue and morality, but yoga is something which you experience within. Even if you were ignorant about religion, but you practised yoga, you would say the same things as the man who belongs to a particular religion. If you give yoga to a communist he will start speaking like a religious man, except that the religious man will give it a label, such as Christianity, Hinduism, or Islam. Give yoga to any atheist and what he will say will be much the same as what you and I say when we speak in religious terms. When one is thirsty he gets water because he searches for it. So when there is spiritual aspiration, spiritual knowledge will also come to you – to everybody it comes. To those who are simple-minded, innocent, unsophisticated, pure, childlike, to them the knowledge comes much quicker. The knowledge is within yourself, not outside. Yoga can help you. Yoga is the means by which you can look within.



10

Preparing for the Cosmic Personality

Indian Association, Manchester, UK

Two years ago a Russian civil aviation magazine published an interesting and instructive article – a research paper on ganja, the Indian hemp which is the oriental brother of marijuana. The paper brought out one important point. It came to the conclusion that hemp intoxication at a certain stage removes the tensions inherent within the cerebral system, and when this happens the faculties of telepathy and clairvoyance unfold. Thus the psychic phenomena only manifests when the centres in the brain responsible for clairvoyance and telepathy are relaxed. The important fact here is that the brain has to be relaxed at the proper centres for psychic unfoldment. This has been known in the science of yoga for more than 3,000 years. It is found in Rishi Patanjali's yogic texts.

Many people are still to be found who know and understand the real meaning of yoga, but still there are many misconceptions commonly held about it. Somehow it's associated with Indian mythology, or withdrawal to the Himalayas, or with people who can drink nitric acid, walk over fire, and stop their heartbeats and undergo live burial for a period of time. Yoga is not this sort of thing at all. It is not a rejection of society or spectacular feats. Yoga is for the

good of all mankind, to bring him to full awareness so that his suffering comes to an end.

The great author of yoga, Patanjali, said through yoga one discovers the different dimensions of individual awareness, and thereby man develops complete mental control, i.e. control over the personality within him. Mental control should not be understood in the usual manner, but in its yogic meaning. By the word 'mind' I mean your personality, the physical, the sensory, the intellectual, psychic and the different spheres of consciousness in which you act, either consciously or unconsciously. Students of depth psychology understand these terms precisely, and those who try to understand yoga using this background, will come to the conclusion that yoga feasibly is a way enabling you directly to operate upon the different layers of your personality. We know how to operate in intellectual spheres and how to live in the world of senses, but there exist dimensions of our personality which are completely hidden from us. As a great philosopher once said, in comparison to what we are capable of perceiving, we don't even perceive half. Along the path of yoga we try to discover those layers of consciousness lying dormant within us which need to be unfolded. You may not be able to walk on fire by practising yoga, but surely the possibility to go deeply into the different dimensions of your personality and the faculty of your awareness will be revealed to you. It is in this latter sense that I talk about yoga.

The importance of hatha yoga is not to be denied and information on asanas and pranayamas, two main aspects of hatha, is easily available. These certainly help you in the development of psychic awareness. One should understand that in a yogic interpretation asana and pranayamas are not merely physical exercises. They can and do bring about changes in your behaviour by their action upon the glands of the endocrine system, for these exercises stimulate the glands which act upon the emotions and thus the behaviour. So the yoga postures, when done correctly and in the right

combinations, not only improve your digestive system and energize you, but they also create a change in your psychological being. Hatha yoga is a science in its own right, apart from meditation.

Dhyana is the Sanskrit word for meditation, and it is the Zen in Zen Buddhism. *Dhyana* means awareness. Awareness of what? Awareness of your consciousness. What is the form of your consciousness? If consciousness is formless then how do you comprehend it in meditation, and if consciousness has form, what is its form? This is the subject matter of meditation in the process of gaining awareness of one's own self. In this process we find that consciousness is absolutely abstract, whether it is mental awareness, sensory awareness, psychic or super psychic awareness, supra-mental or spiritual awareness, or cosmic awareness. In any one of these cases, it does not matter which, consciousness is not a concrete substance, it is a flow of something, and it is homogeneous. In meditation what actually happens is that we develop an image of consciousness. That image or symbol becomes the point of our awareness; it consolidates and crystallizes our awareness. Meditation never begins without some basis upon which to stand. For instance, suppose you choose as your psychic symbol a cross or *Om*. You close your eyes and what do you see? Is it that you see a cross or *Om* there, or do you see your own consciousness in the form of a cross or *Om*? It is your own consciousness in the form of the symbol that you perceive. The image you have comprehended is not the whole of consciousness; it is just one small fraction of the consciousness which is only an awareness of the psychic symbol. It is an idea, it is imagination; it is not the psychic consciousness, it is not the subconscious, and most certainly it is not the unconscious.

When you see a particular symbol of your consciousness with which you begin your meditation, perhaps your guru or Christ, or anyone for that matter, you are not actually on a really deep plane. It is a plane where you comprehend just one aspect of your consciousness, but not the whole of

the consciousness. The ultimate aim of yoga is to isolate your real consciousness from all its associations, and to see it in its pure state. When you see your consciousness in the form of a cross or *Om*, it is not pure consciousness, it is not pure 'being' because it is associated with an object, with the idea of an object. In meditation what we eventually do is deepen the awareness so that we lose touch with the object, the senses, the intellect and the other forms of awareness, and so finally pure awareness alone remains. When the different manifestations of awareness are left behind and your consciousness functions free from all associations, at this moment, you will have achieved yoga in meditation.

This process of meditation is in two parts. In the first part your consciousness is led to the point of extinction. Your awareness, your consciousness, sensuous, mental, objective, empirical awareness has been extinguished. You manipulate the switch, and the lights become dimmer and dimmer. Similarly, your awareness about empirical things becomes dimmer and dimmer. This is the first stage to be achieved in yoga. When you have arrived at the point of negation, where all your verities, all the faculties of your consciousness have become extinguished and brought right down to the point of zero, you will know you have successfully completed the first part of yoga. It is the first part of yoga which is usually taught to disciples, to yoga students of the East and West. Anyone can achieve this first stage of meditation and it will surely bring him peace of mind and health. This first part of yoga is extremely helpful for those who are psychologically abnormal, who have complexes, inhibitions and other kinds of mental illnesses. During the process of using the psychic symbol as a basis upon which to concentrate during meditation, the aspirant develops his own images. What are those images? They are the images of your own consciousness, they are the images of your sick consciousness, of your wrong and suppressed consciousness, your schizophrenic consciousness. It is very important in the first stages of yoga to expel the sick personality, so that

your personality is prepared and you are put in touch with yourself. You will discover what you are and also about your underlying, deeper embedded instincts which you would rather not know, and which you can never find out through self-analysis.

In deeper phases of meditation you see many images – snakes, landscapes, heavens, so many things come to you, even lower images appear – devils or Satan. In Hindu mythology these are called *rakshasas*. They are the lower images of your personality, but gradually the aspects of your images change. You will see beautiful gardens, vast lakes, holy men, beautiful people and yourself at peace; these images are the higher psychic being. They are not objective, they are subjective, they are your own consciousness, not differentiated from you. When sense awareness suddenly ceases, the images stop and the consciousness is brought down to zero; the state of unconsciousness is reached.

At this point you must give up the practice of negation of consciousness. From here you pass on to dhyana, but all our knowledge of the process of yoga ends here. They say real yoga begins when your consciousness has been reduced to zero, when you have negated and eliminated your empirical consciousness. For once this happens, consciousness begins to expand, and only at this time is a person said to be a yogi. Up to now, there has been no book written which clearly describes the expansion of consciousness and, by tradition, this information is given only to the prepared, the ripe, aspirant. For this information about yoga you must go in search of a guru who will open the door and lead you into that realm of personality which is cosmic. Only a guru can help you to become a cosmic personality.

11

Dhyana Yoga

Hindu Centre, London, UK

For centuries many people thought yoga meant a life of renunciation, that it involved becoming a recluse, sleeping on beds of nails, drinking nitric acid, walking over fire or water, or that it was a religion. It was only with great difficulty that Swami Vivekananda, Swami Sivananda, and a few other great saints dispelled these ideas and brought yoga as a science to everyone's door. Today, due to their efforts, people have begun to realize that yoga is a way of life, a system of discipline for all, whether one is religious or agnostic. Yoga does not interfere in any way with the views or values held by anyone. What it does do is help the mind to mental health.

There is no one today who is entirely free of mental sickness. This sickness can never be cured by living in prosperity or by saying a few prayers in the morning. Many people live in ignorance of what mental sickness really is, and the mental factors which exist and cause their worries and fears are unknown to them. You are very conscious of the health of the physical body. You have studied the sciences that tell you about a headache, fever, cold and cough, but it is the inner mental diseases which are the concern of yoga. If they can be cured, then it follows that those other minor bodily diseases will also be positively affected.

Individual minds are part of the collective mind; individual mental sickness and collective mental sickness can lead to disaster and often do. This mental sickness which is spreading throughout the world on an international scale, like an epidemic, has got to be treated before it destroys the whole of humanity.

We know when our bodies are ill and we follow a course of treatment, but when our minds are ill we are unaware of the fact and so we do not seek a cure. Thus the sickness becomes embedded in the inner layer of our mind. The psyche of our being is beyond our conception. We live in a world of matter, of materialism. The people of material wealth, the educated intellectuals especially ignore this problem of mental sickness. They think everything is in order, but if you examine what they are doing, their thoughts, behaviour, the way they infect society with their system of thinking and philosophizing, this is just not true. Their whole life expression is questionable.

The subconscious mind and the deeper layers of your subconscious are ultimately responsible for the expression of life. Every individual should possess the ability to go into the subconscious so that the inner personality can be treated and made healthy. Through yoga this can be done. For instance, *bhakti yoga*, the yoga of devotion, can cure emotional disorders caused by emotional maladjustment, but what about psychic disorders which create a twisted and error-filled personality? These disorders can be eliminated by the practice of dhyana meditation. Often it is thought that meditation is a practice to bring about enlightenment and finally self-realization or God-realization, but yoga can also be used to bring about a state of complete quietness in all the dimensions of our personality. Whether you want to meditate to reach God-realization, or you just want to benefit your mental personality, yoga is the method.

The various aspects of yoga are karma yoga, hatha yoga, jnana yoga, raja yoga and others, but for the modern man who has to step into a new dimension of consciousness of

today and who wants to open new doors to perception, dhyana yoga or meditation, which is a part of raja yoga, is best for him. Through dhyana or meditation, not just the individual, but the whole of mankind can enjoy a healthier environment. Meditation brings a state of complete reorientation and relaxation of almost all the tensions, muscular, mental and emotional. These threefold tensions, which are deeply integrated into our personality, can easily be eliminated by dhyana yoga. I shall briefly describe the process.

In dhyana there are two phases, the negation of consciousness and the expansion of consciousness. In the first stage there is an act of negation or withdrawal of the senses to a central point, but once this withdrawal has taken place and the self or consciousness has transcended sense awareness, then this consciousness must expand inwardly and the whole being comes to a climax of purity, clarity and illumination. This is, of course, only the final, ultimate result of a long and methodical practice of dhyana yoga.

Dhyana yoga can also be used in the treatment of diseases. I have given dhyana to people suffering from epilepsy, to mental patients with seizures, insomniacs, neurotics and psychotics. I have found putting them through the process of meditation an easy and perfect way to change their whole personality and concept of life. At one time I lived with a criminal, a member of the underworld, a really terrible man. Every now and then he would talk about murders, night attacks and burglaries. In the beginning I didn't tell him what we were doing, as he was not ready to accept any religious concepts, especially not the existence of God! For a month and a half I worked with him, teaching him how to meditate, and a great change started taking place in him. Finally, he admitted a belief in God.

So, yoga brings about a state of mental tranquillity which translates itself within the physical structure and our tensions become relaxed. Our brain is constantly in a tense, anxious state, even when we are sleeping. It is always tense and our

brainwaves are in general negative. It is impossible for us to relax our brain in the natural way, and it is in this condition of tension that the brain becomes the base of bad thoughts and the expression of the personality becomes disorientated and distorted. This disorientation, this distortion, which produces such chaos in the manifestation of the physical personality, is eliminated in the process of meditation. The individual consciousness is passing through different spheres of tranquillity and, through the process of witnessing the abnormal complexes, their elimination takes place. Finally, the mind reaches a state of serenity, wisdom and strength.

Considering these highly beneficial effects we should take a fresh look at yoga. When yoga was associated with theology, we only heard interesting and fantastic stories about it, but now yoga is understood in a different way. Educated people, intellectuals have come to think about it in terms of personality. Meditation or dhyana is thought about in the same way. Intellectuals are often unaware of their unhappiness. Under hypnosis, when asked about personal problems and difficulties, intellectuals equate their unhappiness with defeat. The conscious personality does not want to accept defeat, so it tries to hide the dark side of its soul, but man should be aware of these things hidden deeply within himself. Man will have to become more liberated about himself. One should come to the path of yoga in this frame of mind and then the mental troubles or illness can first be treated and cured, after which the mind will have free expression of its inner faculties, and later self-realization can come – the ultimate purpose of life for which we have been born. Whether you come from the East or West, the innermost consciousness in all of us belongs in transcendental dimensions, to the Supreme Being, the supreme consciousness, the highest intelligence in us all.

If you have emotional difficulties, mental errors, mental crises or the greatest self-doubts, yoga can help you. Meditation enables you to face the vast collection of impressions in your consciousness. In deep meditation the

different symbols of your personality are revealed: a bull, a tiger, a landscape, an angel, a house, a river, a dead man, a cross, heaven, a divine figure, a serpent and many things, but know them to be a pattern of your own consciousness. They are symbolic expressions; whether you understand them intellectually is unimportant. Just let these symbols come and, in this way, they will be exhausted. Especially in the beginning of meditation you will find it very difficult to hold on to one point, for it moves about and fixes on to something else, other images. These images are really subconscious eliminations, instinctive expressions, hidden motives which come to you, but it is not necessary to analyze them. Eventually these images cease to arise, perhaps after months or even years of practising meditation. When the whole procession of images is exhausted and the pictures, the film moves very slowly, it means that the inner dimensions of your personality are unfolding and when these images slow down, you are reaching the final point of subconscious elimination. Now you can expect a mind free from sins and sickness, and from this time on you will be aware of your psychic movements.

When your psychic awareness becomes developed, you are equipped to wipe from the face of the earth many of its mental illnesses. We have put an end to the great plagues of the past, but now we have a different epidemic, the problem of psychic ills. Man has been trying to find a cure for them through psychology and these psychologists have a big job, but that job is to cure the symptoms. They only work to the inside from the outside. Psychology tries to cure anger, excessive passions, jealousy and phobias of all kinds. Yoga, on the other hand, doesn't deal with the manifestations of psychic ills. It works from the inside to the outside. It changes the whole structure so that the system is reoriented, so that the foundations of our being are changed. This is the fundamental difference between psychology and yoga. This is why we don't call yogic treatment of mental ills 'yoga therapy', whereas in psychology there is the term 'psychological therapy'.

While in psychological therapy there is a high percentage of remission, in yoga, once a person feels better there is no remission. For instance, a person who has been given psychological treatment for a nervous breakdown cannot say with absolute certainty he will never experience another breakdown, but once you take to yoga, this great path of meditation, you can be sure of certain and lasting results.

For long periods of time, you most certainly will undergo tensions during the process of yoga, but the results will be lasting. You will live your life with strength and courage. The turmoil of life will never pull you down because you will have learned the secret of life itself through yoga. This is the great contribution of yoga to the world. It is a contribution that has not been missed by the young generation, the so-called LSD generation of the modern century. They are taking to yoga in thousands and rejecting the psychological approach of their parents' generation. They have also rejected drugs and are leading a new life. These young people meditate morning and evening – transcendental meditation. This is one proof of yoga's fulfilment to the needs of new humanity, to people who want rebirth. Yoga is the one and only reality today. The doors to a new perception can be opened for everyone through yoga.



12

Yoga

A Protestant church, Belfast, Ireland

The word 'yoga' has become an international word. There is no country on earth where people are not interested in this great ancient science. However, people have vague ideas about yoga and think the system of yoga is not meant for men who are interested in ordinary life; it is only for those who desire self-realization and religious experiences.

In this short talk it will not be possible for me to discuss all the great and infinite potentialities of yoga in regard to the life and evolution of man, and of his mind, but I will give at least a glimpse of this great science which has come to the rescue of the fallen man and the breaking mind.

About fifteen years ago, when I started expounding yoga all over the world, I did not think yoga could play such a vital role in the life of people who are civilized, normal, educated and cultured, who have every means of living and enjoyment at their disposal, as the people of western countries do. However, today the condition is such that the minds of thousands of our youth all over the world are damaged and broken by the overuse of drugs, and they are living life with almost crippled, paralyzed brains. Often, it is through the practices of yoga that they are rejuvenated and revitalized, in spite of the fact that assistance of medical science is available to them in most parts of the world. Not

only in these cases, but even psychological abnormalities and problems, both actual and delusory which have crept up with the advancement of civilization in the form of tension, nervous breakdowns and neuroses, have been successfully removed by the numerous practices of the science of yoga. My association with lunatic asylums, criminals, spoilt children and with people suffering from retarded brains have made it clear to me that the systematic practices of yoga can bring a complete revival in the entire personality.

What is the definition of yoga? In a few words, yoga is a system leading to the unfoldment of a greater and more powerful consciousness in man through certain physical, psychological, psychosomatic and spiritual experiences. The word yoga literally means union, communion, merging or, much better, fusion. Yoga means a process of communion, a process of reintegration of the lower consciousness with the higher and mightier consciousness in man. Just as rivers flow into and become one with the ocean, in the same way, this human being with his small mind, with his narrow consciousness and his limited awareness, who has been suffering very much, by the process of yoga can fuse his lower consciousness, his limited consciousness with the unlimited and infinite consciousness, and become happy, peaceful and full of knowledge. All the practices of yoga tend to develop that state of mind and body where we are able to practice concentration, meditation, one-pointedness and complete integration with the higher self.

The consciousness, the awareness of man, is always evolving and it is evolving at a speed determined by the laws of nature. The evolving of my consciousness and the evolution of the consciousness of mankind in general is subjected to the laws of nature and therefore the speed is very slow. After a few thousand years, at this rate, our consciousness will have evolved to a particular point, but it is going to take thousands and thousands of years to reach the ultimate unfoldment of my consciousness. The practices of yoga, however, can accelerate the speed of evolution and, without

waiting all those thousands of years, we can bring about a total change in our consciousness in this life itself.

What are the practices of yoga? Before I answer this question I will try to correct a few of the limited notions about yoga. Some people think the practices of physical exercises (asanas) and breathing exercises (pranayama) alone constitute the scheme of yoga, but this is not so. I am not saying one should not practise asanas and breathing exercises because they are very important, but nevertheless I want to emphasize they are only preliminary and constitute the first stage of the acceptance of yoga in our life.

At the same time, these so-called physical exercises of hatha yoga do not only have beneficial effects for the physical body. Scientists have discovered that these asanas and pranayamas also influence the negative psychosomatic, mental and vital conditions which appear in the form of psychological diseases. Mental conditions such as restlessness, anxiety, neurosis, sleeplessness and worries can safely be cured through the yogic science of physical postures, for these asanas influence the endocrine glands, adrenal, thyroid, pancreas, etc. By stimulating these glands, they not only remove physical defects and problems, but they also help to correct the imbalanced condition of the human mind.

One surprising fact is that the suicidal complexes which are overriding our generation today have been tackled with great success simply by revitalizing the sacral gland and muscles of the sacral system, which in yoga is called mooladhara chakra. This centre at the bottom of the trunk, in the perineum, is also known as the sacral plexus. It is a very vital centre and it influences the whole brain. When a person has an inclination to commit suicide or is completely desperate and frustrated, instead of giving him a dose of religion or processing him through the psychological treatment, try to revitalize his sacral plexus, mooladhara, and his particular psychological attitude to life will be cured. I know this to be a fact. However, I will not discuss the physical postures in detail.

Pranayama, the breathing system of yoga, is very powerful in controlling the restlessness and oscillations of the brain. This has been well tested by today's scientists. The brain is responsible for our mental behaviour, and when it oscillates, thoughts and impulses are produced in reactions which are really problematic and destructive, so that difficulties are created in our thoughts, emotions and actions. Through pranayama we are trying to revitalize the whole brain through a power known as prana, or it may even be called the energy in man. However, here I want to pass on to the yoga of meditation.

Meditation in the West is regarded as a process of contemplation of a particular idea, but I must define meditation as a process of awareness development by which we try to come close to our higher self. In meditation one tries to acquire complete knowledge of the mind, and to systematically train and regulate the infinite potentialities of the mind. The method is not difficult. Exactly what we do in meditation is make the body quiet, bring about a state of tranquillity and equilibrium in the pranic system, expose the whole mind to our awareness and then try to awaken the consciousness from a lower to a higher level. Meditation may appear very difficult, but be assured that it is not; it is the easiest possible thing that a man can ever do. The difficulty lies in finding the suitable technique, for the techniques have to be right for the person's temperament. Some find concentration easy on sound and others can concentrate well on a particular centre in the body, others prefer concentration on the breath, while the choice of others is internal or external objects. First, it must be determined which practice is right for the individual according to the level of his personal evolution.

Out of hundreds and thousands of practices in meditation, I will explain theoretically a very simple practice. Maybe it is suitable for you, but do not think this is the only practice of meditation, because this is only a short introduction to help you start to practice.

In the beginning you may sit on a sofa or an easy chair, but later when you have progressed you should adopt one

of the sitting postures: padmasana or siddhasana. The period of practice to start with should be no longer than ten minutes at one stretch. This means that for ten minutes we do not move a single part of the body and the eyes are not opened. For ten minutes the spinal cord is kept upright and straight. Whether one sits on a sofa or in a cross-legged pose does not make much difference in the beginning, but it is important that the spinal cord is straight and upright as it controls the sympathetic, parasympathetic and central nervous systems. If you practise asanas and pranayamas then you should do the meditation after, not before.

When sitting this way, with the eyes closed and perfectly relaxed, one should not make an effort to concentrate. Concentration begins only after a long time and not from the day one starts. First, try only to practise awareness, not concentration, and there is a difference between awareness and concentration. Awareness is spontaneous and concentration involves effort.

Now, first of all, with eyes closed do nothing for about a minute and a half except become aware of the whole physical frame, this physical frame which we know so well, this physical body in which one has been living for the last twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty years and moving all around. This physical frame should be the object of awareness for about one and a half minutes and not more. After this you must become aware of the stillness, the steadiness, the immobility of the physical body. Now, at this moment, many of you are immobile, but are unaware you are. It is unconscious stillness, but in meditation you should practise conscious stillness, "I am still and I know that I am still." Thus, one is practising awareness of the body first, next awareness of its stillness and then awareness of the body and stillness together.

After this, when one has made oneself like a statue, try to become aware of the breath, of the natural breath. We know we are always breathing, but we are breathing unconsciously. Well, in this practice breathing remains just the same as always except that we do it consciously. The awareness that should be

maintained is, "I am breathing in, I am breathing out, I am breathing in, I am breathing out." This should be the form of your awareness constantly for about one minute and a half.

This breath which I am referring to now has to be observed at different points of the body. Observe it in the throat, then observe the breath in between the navel and throat like a path ascending and descending, then imagine the breath passing from the eyebrow centre into the head, straight back and forth, back and forth a few seconds each way. Then practice the breath awareness consciously in different regions of the body. I have given only four points for breathing awareness, but there are many more.

After that, a mantra, a particular word such as *So Ham* or *Kleem*, should be added to the breath, and then practise this in the frontal passage, i.e. between the navel and throat mentally, or practise *So Ham* mentally in the passage from the eyebrow centre back. First, be aware of the breath as before, then add the mantra mentally in the form of *So Ham* or any other sound.

For a while practice the whole thing as it has been explained, but after that discover the centre, object or point of meditation right for you and then practise accordingly. Meditation may be practised on mooladhara chakra, in the area of the perineum, on ajna chakra at the top of the spinal cord, or it may be practised on any form or image in the brain itself. I have pointed out some of the psychic centres, but there are many more, and whichever one is chosen, it must be decided by the individual because every person has a particular centre which is already developed.

Practise concentration, without tension, on the point which you choose, say twice a day for ten minutes with total steadiness, without closing the eyes and without the least tension. On certain days there may be a very good, fine meditation and on some days there may be nothing at all, but that does not matter much. If the practice is continued day in and day out your consciousness, a different or higher consciousness, will begin to unfold even without your knowledge.

13

Yoga and the West

Netherlands Television, The Hague, Netherlands

Yoga is a science of right living. It enables one to inculcate in oneself the values of life. The subject of yoga will appeal to those persons who desire change within, who are not confined to mere surface values of life, who are dissatisfied with the present state of affairs both within themselves and in their exterior lives, and who desire a fundamental transformation in their psychological structure. Yoga is perfectly scientific, but it has not been presented to the West in its proper form. Yoga came to western shores through hosts of commercial journalists who misrepresented the subject out of all proportion. They invented fantastic and frivolous tales about the yogis of India and associated yoga with black magic, witchcraft and a set of physical acrobatics.

Some time ago, intellectuals of the West scoffed at yoga and said it was all nose-gazing, but later on some of the thinkers, when they made a thorough study of the subject, were forced to change their opinion in favour of yoga. Aldous Huxley, the famous and influential writer, became a follower of the yogic science himself. He made a very bold statement before an assembly of scientists and said that if yoga is accepted and followed, the western mind will be given a jolt in its way of thinking, and so the nervous disorders prevalent throughout the nation will be largely eliminated. In this

assembly of scientists it was also discussed how a set of yoga asanas and pranayamas, pertaining to the physical aspects of yoga, can bring about physiological changes in the central nervous system of the human organism.

In yoga, meditation plays a central role as a very effective method of bringing mental and physical relaxation, and freeing the mind from tensions and deep-rooted complexes. At present, so-called relaxation is induced by artificial and risky means such as tranquillizers and drugs, and instead of helping the patient, they have only created fresh problems. Tranquillizers may give temporary relief from muscular and emotional tensions, but when their effects diminish this treatment proves harmful to the user. Mental problems he had forgotten for the time being return in a more intense way and often he is not in a position to withstand their powerful impact, and he becomes mentally weak and unstable. Yoga however, while giving relaxation, also brings about total freedom from tensions and complexes.

In some investigations made by Soviet scientists, many startling conclusions were reached concerning yoga. When a man receives a telegram conveying tragic news, his brain sends out waves of certain frequencies and he feels uneasy. If he is then given a dose of tranquillizers the brain contracts, but these brainwaves remain, and if he visits his psychiatrist the brain may stop contracting, but still these brainwaves continue.

If this man did pranayama, it was observed that the brainwaves of tragic news receded. After that the subject was asked to do meditation, which brought these brainwaves to a standstill. This experiment proves that meditation is a system which controls the deeper centres of the cerebral system. Even medical men have now begun to feel that the impact of yoga and its therapeutic value has been definitely established.

Yoga holds importance for our life. It is not for weaklings and it isn't only the concern of minority sections like monks, ascetics and sannyasins. Yoga is primarily meant for householders and also for persons who are emotionally unstable, mentally very restless and physically unfit.

These symptoms are widespread in the affluent societies of the West and yoga can be very useful for their elimination. In fact, western man has realized the importance of yoga for establishing peace and tranquillity in his everyday life, and that is why we see many people coming to India to study the science. If the East needs material prosperity, the West needs the spiritual knowledge already possessed by the East. This I say everywhere I go, that there should be an exchange programme between prosperity and peace, and this exchange programme between prosperity and peace is in the form of yoga.

When yoga was first discussed, the scientists were sceptical, economists were sceptical, communists were sceptical. They said, "What has yoga got to do with us?" or "I am a householder, a member of the world; why should I practise yoga? Yoga is for the man who has cut himself off from life." However, we compelled them at least to investigate yoga sceptically and this they did. The latest reports on *sirshasana*, the headstand pose of yoga, published in Poland by a team of scientists are very noteworthy. Reports state that when *sirshasana* is done, the entire brain mechanism is washed, the brain cells are revived and the state of revival is one to twenty. At night, in your sleep, the brain cells are revived at the rate of one unit per second, whereas in *sirshasana* the rate of revival is accelerated by twenty times. So you can repair your brain twenty times faster with *sirshasana*. A team of doctors in France conducted research on *pranayama* and they concluded that in the physical body there are two vital currents – the negative and positive currents, and if these are not balanced in the body, then disaster occurs. In yoga, these two currents are known as *ida* and *pingala*, the lunar and solar currents respectively.

You may not be aware of the deep-rooted tensions of your life, but when you develop self-awareness and become the witness of all you experience in your life, of everything you are doing, if you realize once in a day you have lived, or think deeply about what you had thought the last hour, you

certainly become aware of the underlying process of tension in you. The housewife should look after her house properly, for if she is careless the house is in disorder and everything is topsy-turvy. In the same manner, let us not ignore our mind which, like the house, needs careful and strict vigilance. Let us take care of this mind by the practice of yoga, and bring order and harmony in our lives.

The West has science to give us, but the East has also something to give. We are poor materially and the West is poor spiritually. We have to be complementary to each other rather than fight and abuse the other. We have to bring about a happy blending between the two systems and make them a composite one. The West can give prosperity and the East a message of harmony and peace. Prosperity and peace have to join together and this union is yoga. "East is east and West is west," Kipling says, "and the twain will never meet." Of course, on the level of materialism, the two shall never meet, but I believe they can unite through yoga. I would like to point out that Sydney, a city of three million people, has more than one thousand yoga centres and Copenhagen, a smaller city, has eleven teachers. In America, one hundred yoga centres and institutions are becoming increasingly popular. The West is definitely in the grip of yoga which is very heartening and encouraging news to yoga lovers. It means that we are approaching the time when the two cultures will unite, and for this purpose we inspire and bring yoga from door to door and from shore to shore.

QUESTIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE

What do you mean when you say you teach people how to live?

I mean, living in the internal being. Man does not live on bread alone, but he lives by his mind. When his mind is peaceful, he is also at peace with his surroundings, but if his mind is disturbed and he is suffering from mental illness, then

his exterior life is miserable. So, when I say I teach people how to live, I mean I teach people to live in their inner being.

Here in the West, there are people who take drugs, Indian hemp and LSD. What do you think about this?

It is my opinion that as long as the people of these countries suffer from tension, muscular, mental and emotional, they will have to depend on some kind of tranquillizers, but once they take to the life of yoga, they will not need them, because yoga brings about a total relaxation in all the dimensions of the human personality. Also, the use of these drugs, such as LSD, is absolutely harmful for the nervous system, and I think the first duty of the thinkers of this country is to provide people with the yogic art of relaxation so they will be able to give up these drugs.

Will you tell us something about your life?

Well, it is very interesting, because I have seen the whole world and I have seen the great leaders, world wars and the changing of civilizations, but more important to me than all this is my spiritual life which started with a spiritual experience when I was six years old. I did not know it was a spiritual experience and I was taken to doctors, psychiatrists and even a mental asylum. They all thought that something was wrong with me because at moments I experienced this state of bodylessness. Only after several years did my parents come to know from a saint that it was a spiritual experience, and finally I learned the truth and I thought about developing it spontaneously. I left my home and renounced everything, my family and property, at the age of nineteen and came to Rishikesh, at the foot of the Himalayas, where I met my master, Swami Sivananda. I studied with him for twelve years. There I learned many things about yoga from him and the secrets of spiritual life, the secrets of the higher life.

After spending twelve years of dedication and service, learning austerity, spiritual, mental, and physical training, I left on an extensive tour. I went largely on foot through

the whole of India. Finally, in 1964, I settled on the banks of the Ganga in Munger, North India, where I built a small institution for myself and my disciples which, after a year, became so famous that students came from all parts of the world. So this is my life in short, and for the last three months I have been on this world tour. I have addressed television, radio, universities, hippies and also the average people in each country, and now I am here with you.

Several months ago we spoke with Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. What do you think of his transcendental meditation?

About Maharishi Mahesh Yogi I now have a very straightforward opinion, because the West is now floundering and experiencing doubts, or so it seems to me, and I think if there is an outstanding personality who has brought the truth to the West, it is Maharishi Yogi and his transcendental meditation is one of the branches of yoga. In the West it is known as transcendental meditation and in India we know it as japa yoga. So what he teaches is absolutely correct and is suitable for westerners.

You know, when he came, he went to the Hilton, he had flowers and he made such a glamorous thing out of it.

You see, he has been coming to the West for the last twenty years and he has come to Europe at least a hundred times, and naturally people know him. In India, gurus are very much respected and revered. When we visit a guru, we always take him flowers as a token of love, and when we talk to him, we talk with great reverence. The same tradition has been introduced to the westerner. It is new to the West, but not new to us in the East.

Is it difficult to practise yoga?

If one has made up his mind, it is easy, it is not difficult. Those thousands of people whose bodies are quite stiff might find it a bit difficult to practise the physical asanas, but when it comes to the question of meditation (watching your mind,

watching your thoughts) I do not think it is very difficult at all. When you know the right yoga for you, it is easy and when you practise the wrong yoga for you, it is difficult.

How do you know if it is right or wrong?

If it is the right yoga, you will be immediately at home with the practise. If your physical body needs physical exercises and you practise the right exercises, you will find peace, tranquillity, ease and freshness. If the practice is wrong, you will find difficulty, unsteadiness and discomfort. In the same way, if when you practice meditation you start getting dizziness and a fainting sensation rather than peace of mind, then that is not good. In yoga, it is best that you consult a guru who knows the art very well.

There are a lot of people who are listening to the programme at the moment and perhaps you could give a special message to them.

Well, my first message and my last message to all here is that yoga is not a religion, but it is a science, it is a science of the mind. Yoga is necessary if you wish to bring about a complete change in the personality and a reorientation in your way of life for the sake of the new generation. The way teenagers are going out of gear in various countries should awaken us to the necessity of yoga. The people of this country should not regard yoga as a mere physical exercise, but as a culture and a way of life.

Is this difficult?

Well, I should say that every important project in life is somewhat difficult in the beginning. I say that yoga may be difficult, but its practices are within the reach of an average person.

Is it possible for any person to practise yoga, like me?

The practice of yoga is easier for those who are thinkers and intellectuals, because their mind can comprehend the deeper necessities of yoga.

This morning I read your article in the newspaper. Is it true that you go deeper in yoga when you break relations with your family?

Yes, I have absolutely no relations with my family and I have no property of my own and I am completely dedicated to the cause and propagation of yoga in the East as well as the West.

Will you please tell us something about japa?

You see, I have a mala and it is meant for this practice of japa. Let us say my mantra is Om Namō Bhagavate Vasudevaya, so I do it this way using the first, third and fourth fingers, but not the fifth and second ones. I have to chant the mantra verbally or mentally with a rhythm, but it must be a fixed rhythm. It must be constant and when I do it mentally, the concentration is here between the eyebrows and I feel as if the mind is vibrating here. After some time of this practice, the mind goes into a state of suspension, blankness comes – you become unconscious. So, in order to avoid this state of unconsciousness, when you complete one round of mala japa, you do not cross the 108th bead, but you reverse the mala and start again with the 108th bead. Now, if you have to practice five malas, the period is fixed, otherwise if I ask you to practice *Om Namō Bhagavate Vasudevaya* for ten minutes without the mala you do not know when ten minutes are over. So this helps you in avoiding sleepiness and also it regulates your meditation. After you have practised five malas or ten malas, you drop your mala and concentrate on a form here at the eyebrow centre. It may be the form of Krishna, Om, Ram, or it may be some other form.

Practice of mantra is not sufficient in itself. Mantra practice is something like cooking the food, but not eating. You see, the purpose of japa is to withdraw your mind from outer experiences and when your mind is withdrawn from outer experiences, without moving your body, you drop the mala and start concentrating on one point, on a particular form. So, everyone who practises must have two things, the mantra which should never change, and secondly the form

which is called *ishta devata*, the cleansing psychic symbol. Everyone can discover his own mantra, it is not very difficult. You see, if you practice the *japa* of *Ram*, for instance, for half an hour and while practising, you feel uncomfortable about it and something is conflicting with your psychology, then *Ram* is not your mantra, but if you practice the mantra and you are at once one with it, and you feel as if you are floating in peace and tranquillity, it is your mantra. The mantra should be in accordance with your psychology, the mantra should be your psychological symbol, and I have found that in the West especially, there are a few mantras that are particularly powerful. One is *Om*. I know that at a public meeting when I ask people to chant *Om*, most people 'go in' because the people of this country are very sensitive, they are not dull. So, the moment they chant *Om* they vibrate the whole body. Another mantra which is very comfortable with the people of the West is *Ram*, and the third mantra is *Shyama* and a fourth mantra which people of this country can practise with great success is *Om Namaha Shivaya*. This much I can suggest and, if you are keen to hear it from me, I can tell you what your mantra is.



14

Concentration and Meditation

Satyananda Ashram des Tantras, Vienna

The different methods of concentration and meditation have their basis in the different temperaments and different states of evolution of the human mind. The purpose of yogic concentration is to control the mind and brainwaves, and these thought waves function at all the levels of your personality. Yogic practices control the conscious layers of thoughts and when your surface thoughts are controlled you can take efforts to control the thoughts in the subconscious level. There are many methods for control of conscious impulses and there are advanced yogic methods which lead to the control of subconscious impulses.

Different forms of meditation, such as ocular, auditory, pranic, psychic and mantra meditation suit different temperaments and inclinations. For musicians, the auditory form of meditation known as nada yoga is very suitable. In nada yoga the mind is brought under control by developing inner sound. You close the eyes and ears with the fingers, and control the muscles of the perineum. This exercise is called moola bandha. When you practise moola bandha, a strong hard pillow is kept under the perineum. You first close your eyes, perform moola bandha, withdraw awareness from the sense centres, then you listen to the sounds vibrating inside your brain. In this way you keep on listening to the

various inner sounds one by one. This meditation, nada yoga, also gives absolute relaxation. At night between 10 pm and 12 pm, and in the morning between 4 am and 6 am are the right times to practise nada yoga; you can do nada yoga even without closing your ears at these special times. When you have mastered this practice, you can dispense with the pillow and can just lie on your bed and listen to the sounds – of a bell, a harp and so many other sounds. The final stage of nada yoga is the hearing of the sound of *Om*, the unspoken and unwritten sound.

Another practice is trataka. In trataka you remain looking at a particular point with open eyes, without moving the pupils. The flame of the candle is a good object of meditation. You look at the flame for some time, let us say ten minutes, and then close your eyes and try to see the flame at the eyebrow centre. What you see is not imagination, but is the effect the light has on your brain and on the ocular system. This flame image remains for some time and makes the mind introvert. Trataka is very helpful for increasing the intensity of concentration and those who have turbulent minds should practise it.

A third practice is japa and it is especially relevant for western people. Japa is a system by which you can progress rapidly in the spiritual realms and simultaneously it releases all your tensions. In other spiritual practices, the presence and help of a spiritual master is very essential, lest the aspirant go astray. In the West, where advanced spiritual gurus are very rare, practice of japa for the spiritual aspirant becomes a source of blessings, for japa yoga can be practised safely without the guidance of a master. Japa yoga consists of mentally repeating a word or a set of syllables which create certain sound vibrations in the brain and emotional and psychic bodies. When you repeat the mantra, since every sound has an image, the image is awakened again and again in your psychic body. You may be incredulous at this, but if you analyze it, every sound produces an image on the brain through the ears and the brain converts these into thought

forms. Similarly, when you repeat a mantra many times over it brings about relaxation and one-pointedness of mind.

In japa when you repeat any mantra, concentrate the mind at one of the three centres: the heart, throat or eyebrow centre and try to listen to the rhythmic movement of the mantra like a time piece. If the mantra is one of syllable *Om*, then the rhythm should be neither too fast nor too slow, and when you hear the mantra at a particular centre, go on hearing the rhythm as if it were a clock with precisely fixed timing. Repeat the mantra for fifteen or twenty minutes continuously without a break. Even if your mind is distracted by disturbing thoughts that may intervene, it does not matter, keep on chanting. The practice of concentration takes time and therefore never be discouraged if you encounter failures in the beginning. If you continue japa, in a short time the mind will pass into meditation and eventually into samadhi which is a very high state. You will find that the mind will keep progressing every day. However, on some days the mood will be good and you will repeat the mantra for half an hour, and your mind will be concentrated and peaceful, on other occasions your mind will not be under your control. Japa yoga is a preparatory stage for a course of meditation and after the practice of japa you will have to concentrate on an image or a symbol.

There are some people who are unable to concentrate their minds on any one of the centres along with japa and these people should do japa a different way. In this method we closely watch the breathing process with the eyes closed. We all breathe, but we are not usually aware of our breathing and when you become aware of every breath it is a form of concentration in itself. We breathe about fifteen times every minute and about 900 times in an hour. So, if you sit quietly for one hour and chant the mantra with the breath, you will chant 900 times, but it is very important that the breath is natural, normal and effortless. In this practice constantly you will have to think, "I am breathing in and I am breathing out." Even when you first begin this awareness,

you will find your awareness of life to be greatly increased and you will assimilate experiences with greater detail and understanding.

The first stage is conscious breathing. Next you have to awaken the psychic passage or the pathway of the mind, so while concentrating on your breath, move the mind through the psychic passage between the navel and throat. When you did japa on the mantra in the previous exercise, the mind did not move but remained at a particular psychic point where you developed an image of the mantra, but here we awaken the psychic passage by passing the mind up and down with the breath. There are many psychic paths in the body, but one should not practise all. In the beginning, develop the psychic path between the navel and throat. When you do this while concentrating on your natural breath you will find that a flow of mental energy, a flow of consciousness, is moving up and down between these two points. After a while, no longer think in terms of breathing, just remain aware of the ascending and descending of the consciousness through the psychic passage, so when you inhale forget your nose and breath, but in the passage from the navel to the throat feel consciousness going up and when you exhale do not watch the breath moving from the nose, but feel consciousness descending from the throat to the navel. This psychic passage becomes the source of concentration.

Now you should combine the *So Ham* mantra with the movement of the breath – *So* with the incoming breath and *Ham* with the outgoing breath. Practise with your eyes closed. When you think of your incoming breath it is *So* and when you think of your outgoing breath it is *Ham*. When you breathe in, the sound of the breath is *So* and when you breathe out, the sound of the breath is *Ham*. If you prefer, combine your own mantra with the breath, instead of *So Ham*. You should have constant awareness of all that you are doing. If you are breathing, there should be awareness that you are breathing, if you are coordinating mantra with

breath, you must be aware that you are coordinating mantra with breath, you must be aware that you are doing this and there must also be awareness of the whole process of concentration.

After considerable practice you should then start to concentrate on any point or centre, i.e. you should do the previous japa yoga exercise. I have given you two methods – one with the breath in the psychic passage and the other with just the mantra at one of the psychic points, and you can do whichever you find easier. Now I have explained to you the method of japa yoga which is certainly a very effective technique.

Another technique is known as ajapa japa which is very difficult to practise without proper training. The only difference between ajapa japa and japa is that in ajapa japa the spinal cord, the vertebral column, is the psychic passage and, instead of the normal natural breath, you practise *ujjayi pranayama*, or psychic breath, which is produced by contracting the glottis. Students of hatha yoga, who have been practising pranayama, will know *ujjayi*. This pranayama creates psychic heat. When you practise *ujjayi*, you create a psychic passage in the spinal cord and pass your consciousness through the different centres of the spinal cord.

The process of ajapa japa is divided into six stages. It is a powerful method, but it must be learned under guidance because ajapa japa does not suit everybody, but if it suits you concentration will come easily and you can sit in meditation for many hours together.

There are many methods of concentration through which you can penetrate the outer world and go inside. Whichever method you take, please remember it is only a means and not the end. The end is to develop an image of your consciousness. Many people in this country will hesitate to meditate on a symbol because they think it is idolatry and they don't want to idolize, but when you close your eyes and imagine a lotus, a rose or a man, what

actually is it that you see? Do you see that particular object or is it your own consciousness you see? A lotus, animal or anything you see in the depth of meditation is nothing but your own consciousness. As this consciousness, this mental awareness, becomes completely purified, the symbol will become completely clear and when you can visualize a rose as clearly as you see it outside in the garden and if the qualitative perception does not differ, you will have reached a very high degree of concentration. Verily, that man has concentration who is able to see as much with his eyes closed as when his eyes are open. Once the difference between ocular perception and thought perception disappears and the thought images come like mirror reflections, once your thoughts are completely purified, then you have perception of the spiritual path inside you with similar clarity as you see the way outside. Unless you are able to visualize the rose inside you clearly, your mind is not crystal clear, and this means that between the thought of the rose and yourself there exists a barrier, and this barrier has to be removed. Can you always recollect your dreams? In dreams sometimes you see a dead man, an animal, a landscape or your friends, and how clearly you see them.

When the mind becomes one-pointed, it loses its contact with the outside world for a time and you become dead to the world. If you are able to concentrate your mind and make it one-pointed in meditation, there will be detachment from external things. If your mind is detached from outside consciousness for even one second, the object of concentration becomes very clear and you will develop clairvoyance. Also, a man develops a photographic memory. A photographic memory is when the mind does not use the faculty of memory, but the whole picture presents itself before the mind as if it is actually taking place. You must have heard about the photographic memories of many people. The name of Swami Vivekananda is worth mentioning here. He demonstrated his wonderful power of photographic memory in America one day before a librarian.

He could see the whole text of the book before him. It is not a miracle, it is not magic, but it is the development of a faculty of your mind, and a yogi knows its secret.

Concentration and meditation are the secrets of mental health, but their methods vary according to different temperaments and limitations, and to one's understanding. Therefore, each of us must find out the correct method for himself. When you have progressed in one faculty of consciousness and meditation, further faculties will develop one after the other. For those who lack a spiritual teacher to guide them, I would suggest the path of japa. This is not perhaps a shortcut, but it is a sure way of doing it. If you were to practise pranayama two hours a day, or to do asanas or sit in the lotus posture for three hours daily, just imagine how exhausted you would become, but if you practise breath awareness only once in the morning and once in the evening, the only difference is that, whereas before you were breathing unconsciously, you will now breathe consciously.

When you concentrate on your breath, the mind naturally becomes concentrated. Yoga says prana (breath) and mind are interrelated, and when the mind is disturbed the pranas are also not quiet and the converse is also true. So, when you concentrate your mind, your pranas become tranquil. These two elements in life are inseparable, just as electricity, light and heat are inseparable. By controlling prana you can bypass the mind, but this is a difficult process; you have to take care of diet, of your celibacy, you have to take care of many things not possible for the ordinary man. The other alternative, the control of prana by concentration of mind is the easiest path for most people.

Those who are sincere and earnest, who want mental relaxation and to advance spiritually should start to practise japa yoga. May I suggest two books to you concerning japa yoga: *The Garland of Letters* by John Woodroffe and *Japa Yoga* by Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh. These books will give you a very sound and technical approach to the science of japa yoga.

15

Meditation

Bonn University, Bonn, Germany

This evening I have a very nice topic for you. The topic is meditation. Meditation for what end, you ask. There are people who say that meditation is a way to self-realization, for fusion of individual awareness with the highest awareness, but in my humble opinion I feel this aim for meditation is too high. Meditation is for self-realization, but this I think very few people can teach, fewer can learn and only the rare individual can practise. Unless the mind is sane, the healthy and the subliminal inhibitions, the errors of personality are completely remedied, it is not all advisable to practise expansion of individual consciousness to cosmic consciousness. Otherwise it tends to become a kind of self-hypnotism.

When I discuss yoga this evening, I shall discuss it in relation to individual and human welfare. Spiritual awareness may be the basic goal of life, but it is too early for us to think about it because we are not keeping healthy, our minds are ill. We are suffering from chronic illnesses, not only from physical diseases, but from mental ones also. People in underdeveloped countries are suffering largely from physical maladies, and we in our so-called prosperous and advanced civilization are also suffering from chronic mental illnesses, about which we are totally ignorant. We are not aware what

these psychological errors are, the deep-rooted tensions and afflictions which are guiding our destiny and which guide human behaviour. These individual afflictions, the tortures and pains which are inevitable in our life, are guiding the destiny of the world. The restlessness throughout the world is an outcome of the sickness in the mind of modern man. There must be some way to cure this sickness, some way to develop a healthy condition in society, in the community, in the family and in the mind of the individual. Religions have failed, the economic programmes have also failed to give peace to mankind and to solve the problems of the individual, the community and society. The problems start basically with the individual and these problems can only be solved by the individual. The individual is the nucleus of most of the problems that lie before us. It is with this background that I speak to you about meditation.

If you agree with me that meditation is a science of mind and a science of God, and that it is a system for the reorientation of human personality as a whole and not metaphysics; if you agree it is a system through which we can root out the individual pains, the unseen afflictions and the tensions that are all around us in the muscular, mental, emotional and spiritual bodies then let us go ahead with the subject. You will agree that our behaviour, thinking, actions and reactions are guided by the soul, that is to say by consciousness. This consciousness is not pure; it works in association with the environment and other conditions, as a result of which tensions pile up in the different spheres of our personality of which we are unaware, and so we suffer from insomnia, inhibitions, juvenile delinquency, sexual anarchy, hatred, restlessness, anxiety and worry. We look for tranquillity and peace, but the peace does not come from outside and the tranquillity cannot be introduced, rather they come with unfoldment within.

Meditation is the system by which we are able to get rid of these tensions and analyze our deep-rooted psychological errors. Meditation is concerned with consciousness,

consciousness that is empirical and consciousness that is internal; the consciousness that perceives the world and the consciousness that is unable to perceive the world. This consciousness in man is the subject of meditation.

The first process in meditation is relaxation and remember that meditation begins with relaxation, but this is not relaxation where you lie down quietly, close your eyes and feel that you are becoming lighter and happier and so on. I don't mean the method of auto-suggestion or self-hypnosis. The method of yoga is the real relaxation. In yoga a process of withdrawal is the process of relaxation. What Rishi Patanjali calls *pratyahara*, the withdrawal of external consciousness or the act of disassociation of your consciousness from outside objects, that is relaxation, but this relaxation cannot be complete unless you have relaxation in the system.

Before we proceed with the topic of meditation, let us discuss what we mean by tensions. Tensions have physical, mental and emotional causes. Faulty secretions in the endocrine system can cause tensions and they are not necessarily due to the psychological problems of your society, economic pressure or emotional maladjustment in your family. Nervous disorders and problems in your body can be due to a faulty endocrine system. Faulty endocrine secretions are caused by faulty living, faulty breathing and so on.

Therefore, in the scheme of yoga, *asanas* and *pranayama* come first as they help to get rid of muscular and physical tensions, to neutralize the faulty secretions and to eliminate toxins from the body. For instance, you could be suffering from hypothyroid, or over-secretion of the pituitary, or deficiency in the pancreatic gland, and this would greatly influence your behaviour and thinking. This tension due to a physical cause, which can cause a lot of trouble and which bars the experience of peace in our day-to-day life, can be solved by the practice of *asanas*, *pranayama* and *hatha yoga*.

People think that *asanas* and *pranayama*, the yogic exercises, are just exercises. They are not only exercises. They

should not be practised as exercises; they should be practised with great care.

Scientific investigations that have been carried out in different parts of the world, in Russia, Poland, India, France and Germany, have proved that during the practice of asanas and pranayama the whole endocrinal system is influenced, toxins are eliminated and the energy blocks are cleared. So the practice of asana and pranayama removes muscular tensions.

However, mental tensions are the greatest tensions we have to consider. Over thinking, wrong thinking and vicious thinking which we cannot escape in our day-to-day life cause mental tensions. We can cure mental tensions by the practice of relaxation where we withdraw our consciousness. This is the first part of yoga, which later leads to expansion of consciousness. There are different techniques which withdraw or calm down tensions created by the ocular system, auditory system, nervous system and tensions created by internal functional deficiencies. All this is done during the practice of relaxation, for in the process of relaxation we have some of the most important techniques.

When we practise meditation, or rather when we start the process of relaxation, we must choose a method or technique. Not every technique is right for everybody, but there are some practices which can be practised without any difficulty or risk. The easiest one is ajapa japa, spontaneous awareness. In this spontaneous awareness you concentrate on the breath and try to formulate an ascending and descending process. This causes the consciousness to become diminished. The area of experience is eliminated gradually, when the consciousness functions in a limited area, you start with a symbol. You concentrate on a psychic centre and there you try to develop a clear-cut internal, non-sensual mental awareness of the symbol. The symbol should become clear to you. This is necessary to effect complete relaxation.

It is not enough if you are able to visualize just your subconscious mind. In meditation you should be able to see

your conscious mind, your subconscious mind and also your unconscious mind, which is very difficult. The moment the experience and perception of the unconscious personality occur, complete relaxation comes to you. Therefore, you will find that there are moments in an individual's life when he becomes aware of the unconscious during deep sleep, which leaves him with a feeling of complete relaxation.

In the technique of yoga it is believed that when consciousness is detached from conscious, subconscious and unconscious, when individual awareness functions independently of these three dimensions of consciousness, complete relaxation takes place and meditation begins. Meditation can never begin without relaxation, but relaxation is very hard to achieve. You may be under the illusion that meditation is difficult. No, it is not. Meditation is accomplished spontaneously. Meditation comes to you and it does so instantly, but to develop meditation you have first to go through the whole process of relaxation.

In yoga the process is *pratyahara* and *dharana*. *Pratyahara* means withdrawal of consciousness, and *dharana* means the conception of consciousness in a particular way. You see your consciousness, your awareness as an internal perception, in the form of a round stone, a triangle, a flower, or it may be anything. That which you see within is not imagination; it is a form of consciousness. If you see a flower within, you see your own consciousness in the pattern of a flower, that form of consciousness through which you perceive the world.

It is this consciousness through which you are now understanding me. It is the same consciousness through which I am able to tell you something about yoga, and the same consciousness by which you know right and wrong, with which your intelligence or intellect functions, which manifests in day-to-day life in the form of memory and by which you understand hatred and love. It is the same consciousness which functions in the world, and it is not imagination, not hypothesis, but a force. It is awareness or

an instrument of knowledge, a medium of understanding, or the substratum of perception.

It is this consciousness which in yoga is withdrawn from exterior objects, from intellectual knowledge, from experiences and memories of the past, from knowledge. When it has been disassociated from different bases of perception and becomes clear to you in the form of a triangle, flower, stone, light or animal, you are seeing your own consciousness and this is the fundamental secret of yoga.

Meditation, therefore, is a process by which you see your own consciousness – consciousness sees itself through itself, without any intervening medium, support or agency. In meditation you undergo a process, not of self-analysis, but of self-perception. It is in this that meditation goes beyond the psychoanalysis of modern psychology. You not only analyze yourself; you see yourself. How do you see yourself? Do you see your consciousness in the form of a triangle? No, you try to see yourself in the form of a triangle, but when you do this, the triangle vanishes and is replaced by the images of your psychological personality.

Images come up in the hundreds and thousands like a film show. You do not see real life pictures; you do not see what you have experienced; perhaps you don't even see the people you know in this life, but you will see images which represent your consciousness, which represent your instincts. You will see symbols of things which have been causing you trouble and which have been the basis of tensions in your life; you will see images which represent the cause of anger, passion, hatred, insomnia, anxiety and the cause of all sorts of psychosomatic troubles.

Then again you try to bring back the triangle, but it disappears anew. It is replaced by even deeper psychological images, because in the subconscious mind there are depths and layers which you will have to realize one after the other. There is a moment in meditation when you will see visions, both good and bad. You will take them to be astral images. You will think that a ghost or an angel has come, but nothing

comes from outside, for everything emerges and explodes from inside.

It is only your consciousness. There is nothing beyond your consciousness and anything that you see in the deeper states of meditation is a manifestation of your personality, of different complicated, unseen, unknown, invisible layers of your personality, perhaps which you could never know through any method of psychoanalysis. You see the experiences of your life forgotten when you were a child, which are insignificant, but which were causing trouble. They come up in the form of an explosion, in the form of evil pictures or divine expressions.

These are the subliminal images, the samskaras as they are called in yoga, the past impressions. They come up and thus exhaust themselves, one after the other, but this is possible only if you can bring about a concentration, consolidation or crystallization of your consciousness.

In meditation, when you concentrate on breath, the natural breath, you not only concentrate on the natural breath but you try to locate a psychic passage for the natural breath. Breath is breath; as you know, it is something physical, but the idea, 'I am breathing', is not physical, it is psychic. When I breathe it is physical the breath goes to the lungs and supplies oxygen and purifies the blood, but when I know that 'I am breathing' and I am breathing, it is not physical but psychic. You create a psychic idea, and this psychic idea is the gateway to meditation, to relaxation, to concentration and to psychoanalysis. You create a psychic passage. In yoga there are hundreds of passages, but I will introduce only two of them.

One passage for beginners is between the navel and throat, and the second passage is the vertebral column, the spinal cord. The idea 'I am breathing', the consciousness 'I am breathing', should be felt in one of these passages. Either you have to feel 'I am breathing' in the frontal passage, or you have to feel it in the spinal cord. If you feel it in the spinal cord it is much better, because concentration on the spinal cord takes you to the unconscious directly.

I am not talking about the frightening kundalini yoga, please remember. Although I do not believe kundalini yoga is so frightening because, as a student of psychology and as a student of yoga, I believe kundalini yoga is a way to the unconscious, and I know that to get into the unconscious brings perfect peace and complete power. I do not mean that kundalini yoga in which you break your body or bones, no. You take your consciousness to the spinal cord, right from the bottom up to the top, in the form of 'I am breathing in, I am breathing out.' When you breathe in you must feel you are ascending. When you breathe out you must feel you are descending. Who is ascending and who is descending? Consciousness is ascending and consciousness is descending. Then why do you synchronize it with the breath? Because it makes it possible, it makes it easier to feel the ascending and descending order. At the same time, if you breathe in and breathe out you create more oxygen in the system which helps you to relax. When you accelerate the metabolism in the system by oxygenation, relaxation is also speeded up.

In this ajapa japa, you should remain aware of the fact you are breathing in and breathing out by counting the breath so that you do not fall into deeper unconsciousness, so that your consciousness does not suspend. Sometimes in meditation, when concentration takes place, the breath will stop and this brings unconsciousness. The purpose of yoga is not to become unconscious.

The purpose of meditation is to develop awareness in absolute unconsciousness. I am not talking about samadhi, or cosmic awareness or divine experience. I am saying that yoga is a method by which you see your own unconsciousness.

At night when you fall asleep, you become unconscious. You go to the unconscious every night, but you do not see it or experience it, and therefore only partial relaxation takes place. Yoga can bring you to the unconscious so you see it; you can investigate and visualize your unconscious. When you come back, you will come back with energy, power, confidence and absolute equilibrium. This is the basis of yoga.

This process of inhalation and exhalation, and of ascending and descending consciousness in the spinal cord or in the frontal passage, is not real meditation. It is an act of negation of consciousness, an act of withdrawal of empirical, external, objective consciousness. A moment comes when consciousness is negated to one point – the circle is reduced to a point and then you have to stop relaxation. If you continue relaxation further you will enter into unconsciousness.

When you stop relaxation and this process of negation of consciousness, every student of meditation must have a psychic symbol. You can have a small green leaf, a flower, a star, a triangle or a human figure, anything, but you must have a symbol. You should not use an abstract idea. The first is called concrete meditation and the second is abstract meditation. Abstract meditation leads to unconsciousness, but concrete meditation leads to the unconscious with consciousness.

What is the indication and proof that you have visualized your subconscious and unconscious? I am not going to discuss the superconscious. In your unconscious you are able to visualize the object of your meditation as clearly as you see me and you see other people every day. The unconscious is not at all like a conscious dream. If the state is like a conscious dream and you see figures moving or a flower, but you are not aware you are seeing a flower, then it is the subconscious. Another indication of the manifestation of the subconscious personality is that you see psychic visions, one after the other, both good and bad. However, when you go into the unconscious all these visions stop. No angels or ghosts come. You see only that particular object upon which you are trying to crystallize your consciousness – the lotus flower, the elephant, the serpent or the flame of fire. That is all you will see because that was your object of meditation. When you see the object of meditation internally, it will be so clear and real that sometimes when you return to normal consciousness you will wonder whether our reality is truth or whether that unconscious reality is truth.

When the unconscious is perceived, the distinction between conscious experience and unconscious experience is dissolved. The experience of the object in the unconscious is as real as the experience of the object on the conscious plane. If you happen to see me in the unconscious, perhaps you will see me as you see me now. When you withdraw yourself from the unconscious and come down to the conscious plane, you will say, "Oh yes, I saw Swamiji as real as this!"

This particular state of experience is known in yoga philosophy as *darshan*. *Darshan* means conscious visualization of the object in all its dimensions. When your consciousness has become completely free from limitations, entirely free from sense consciousness, intellectual consciousness and all other modes of empirical consciousness, then deep peace is achieved. It is at this moment you become a yogi. They say it is then the tensions, the afflictions, the trouble, the shocks, the after-effects and reactions of day-to-day life are completely resolved.

Meditation is not at all difficult as you will see for yourself after some practice. Your practice will be divided into two parts: first will be negation and second will be expansion of awareness. In this process many experiences will come, also a lot of mental turmoil. The subconscious will come before you and all the memories of this life will be revealed, and you may even go back further.

Through meditation you go to different rooms of your life and try to clean them one by one. Once you have cleaned yourself you should take to the path of spiritual life and go to a guru to ask him to give you initiation. Perhaps, at that moment, if he touches your forehead you might pass into samadhi. One can attain higher experiences than the subconscious and unconscious dimensions of personality, but for that we must qualify ourselves, which we do through the practice of yoga.

Yoga is not the end, it is the means. Yoga is an act or process of self-purification. By medicines we cure diseases,

but by yoga you purify the body and the mind in all its dimensions, conscious, subconscious and unconscious. All the three stages of personality, all the three rooms are cleared. Then, when everything is calm and quiet, when your samskaras or karmas have been exhausted and afflictions are no more, you should go on the higher spiritual path and not before that, even though the aim of your life should be spiritual realization. You should not seek that higher spiritual path until mental health has been attained and the trammels, errors, confusion and pandemonium in the personality have been completely calmed down. It is for this purpose that we practise dhyana yoga or meditation.

Meditation by itself does not help entirely because, although by meditation you clean your body, your mind and your consciousness, your karmas will still accumulate as impressions. Your emotional personality and thinking will again become erroneous. It is something like cleaning the room, and then putting the dirt back again. You are trying to clean your personality of dross, avidya, errors and tensions, but simultaneously karmas are accumulating. On one side you are clearing tensions, and from the other side tensions are coming in and again you are in the same state. It is for this reason that a yogi who practises meditation must also practise karma yoga, bhakti yoga and jnana yoga. Through karma yoga you stop the effects of samskaras, karmas going into the deepest core of your personality. There is an art to do this – the art is found in the *Bhagavad Gita*.

There are hundreds and thousands of people throughout the world who are practising meditation but who are not happy because they look for everything in meditation alone. It does help them, there is no doubt about that, meditation is a great thing, but when I start teaching the different techniques of meditation, please remember that my personal opinion is this: along with meditation, karma, bhakti and jnana yoga should also be practised.

16

Problems in Meditation

Sufi Centre, Paris, France

My topic for tonight is problems in meditation. Meditation has a reputation for being easy, but it is not as easy as you may imagine. Those who want to travel the spiritual path and want to succeed in meditation should know the difficulties and the problems that are encountered.

Meditation is a process that involves the mind of the individual. In fact, when we try to solve the problems of meditation we are trying to solve the problems of the mind. The problems of meditation are the problems of the individual mind, and the problems of the mind are the problems of meditation.

The first and foremost problem of the mind is that it is always restless. The mind is restless, not because it is in its own nature restless, but because there are underlying causes which create disturbance in the mind. All the disturbances you face in meditation are due to these causes or samskaras, impressions which you accumulate throughout the course of your life. These impressions are accumulated year after year, every second of our life, through the ocular medium and through the auditory medium, because of our faulty approach to life.

When you analyze the nature and the substratum of your mind, you will find that the mind is not a bundle of habits,

but it is a force of impressions or it is a force of samskaras. According to modern psychology, these subconscious impressions are stored in the subliminal body in the form of inhibitions, complexes, suppressions, neuroses, fears and phobias. All those experiences which we had during our instinctive life, during our childhood, when we lacked the ability of rationalization, remain unexhausted in us and they make up the astral body or the subconscious body. When you concentrate your mind through any powerful yogic method, you pass into the subconscious depth of personality and experience these past impressions in the form of psychological images. Through concentration you penetrate the long passage of your consciousness. While passing through this passage, you are all that you have accumulated and experienced, or what are called internal disturbances. Then you try to go into the superconscious state.

The first problem in meditation is how to withdraw the mind from outside, from the physical body and from the physical experiences. The position to adopt for meditation presents a very basic difficulty. Even the cross-legged posture is hard to sit in for a long period of time, not to mention the lotus posture. In the lotus pose the feet may become numb and the blood circulation may stop, and if we practise meditation lying down we don't know whether we are going to meditate or we are going to sleep.

These difficulties can be tackled by the proper practise of yoga asanas and avoiding a diet conducive to lethargy, or one which makes the arteries and bones stiff, or which creates too much uric acid in the body. The bones and arteries should be supple enough so they do not press the veins and thereby cause clogging of the blood. The muscles in the heart that pump the blood throughout the body and the muscles that maintain the circulation should be strong and elastic. Numbing of the limbs should also be avoided.

I shall now discuss the problems encountered when withdrawing the mind from external things. It is a common experience that the moment concentration becomes deep,

sleep comes, or when concentration starts the mind runs in so many different directions you don't know how to bring the mind back, or maybe the mind likes exterior things so much that even if you could bring it back to inward concentration, it doesn't want to come.

Some people are tamasic or lazy by temperament; others are rajasic or terribly disturbed; some possess peace, equilibrium and a little disturbance; and there are those sattvic people who by nature are calm, quiet, steady and tranquil. You will have to develop a technique for yourself according to your particular kind of temperament. Suppose you are an aspirant whose mind is absolutely disobedient. You deal with the mind exactly as you would with a problem child. You should not make an effort to force your mind back to the point of consciousness and neither should you be anxious about disturbance.

The above mentioned type of aspirant, whose consciousness is very agitated, should practise a particular technique which is simply a process of witnessing or observing. The process I am going to suggest is known as *antar mouna* – *antar*, internal, *mouna*, silence. In *antar mouna* we do nothing but practise a state of impartial, disassociated and alert observation of all that takes place within us and outside us. We neither attempt to control the thoughts, nor do we react to outer disturbances and we are not at all disappointed by the bad thoughts that rise in our mind. We don't have the duty to bring our mind back to one-pointed concentration, nor are we discouraged by the wandering mind. We are not disturbed by the sounds outside, nor have we the problem of posture or a straight spinal column. We have no problems at all; whatever is happening – I am the seer. Good or bad, I am the seer; disturbance or one-pointedness, I am the seer. If I change my physical position, I am the seer. I am not the concentrator; I am not the meditator. No, I am just the seer of all that is taking place in me. I am impartial, detached and unrelated.

Antar mouna has to be practical and methodical. It should be done stage by stage. First, we practise a witnessing of

sense experiences that come from outside, then we practise a witnessing of the spontaneous thought processes that evolve from the depths of our personality. Finally, we come to a stage where we become a witness of thoughtlessness.

If the aspirant is alternating between one-pointedness and distraction then one should turn to a different practice where one develops a psychic passage, a psychic point and a psychic system of rotation for the consciousness. People who find concentration easy but are disturbed by the auditory medium should practise everything by closing their ears, which is nada yoga. Here one closes both the ears with the fingers and concentrates on the breath, on internal sounds, on a form or on anything, and thus one goes in and starts meditation. Or the method of ajapa japa using psychic breathing may be more helpful. There are many, many techniques through which you can withdraw and bring your consciousness down to one-pointed meditation. These are not higher or lower techniques and can be adopted by one who knows what is suitable for him. However, remember, all these practices are not for meditation, but are only for withdrawal, for the negation and elimination of your external consciousness.

There are two great problems in yoga. First is how to withdraw the mind from outside and second is, once the mind is withdrawn, how to hold the consciousness at a particular point and maintain awareness internally. The first problem can be solved by finding the suitable and most effective technique for oneself. The second problem poses an extra complication, for consciousness has no form. It is a process only; it is pure awareness and when your consciousness is devoid of impressions, consciousness becomes formless. If your consciousness functions based on certain experiences, the form of the experience becomes the form of your consciousness. If, therefore, your consciousness is aware of pain, pain is the form of your consciousness, but if you are free from all kinds of sensation, then what form does your consciousness take? No form at all. For this

reason, when you are able to withdraw your consciousness from outside, you must have a basis for your consciousness to function internally, because unconsciousness is not yoga. Yoga is defined as withdrawal of external consciousness into cosmic awareness. Accept whichever technique you find comes easiest for the withdrawal of consciousness from outside to inside, and then you must decide on which basis you are going to conduct your consciousness inwardly.

Every spiritual seeker must have two practices in meditation and both these must be practised in meditation simultaneously: i.e. the practice of *pratyahara*, withdrawal or negation, and the practice of *dharana*, or the holding of awareness. One is the process of melting the outer consciousness, and the other is the process of formulating the inner consciousness. In order to avoid the problems in meditation which will crop up in the future, it is absolutely essential to practise both systems at the same time, for those aspirants who do not practise both *pratyahara* and *dharana* simultaneously do not reach *dhyana* or meditation. If aspirants practise only withdrawal of consciousness they experience tranquillity, equilibrium, good sleep and relaxation, but their experience doesn't go deeper or higher than that. Those who practise only *dharana*, without *pratyahara*, develop a kind of internal tension, internal repression and suppression.

After a few months or years these practitioners are discouraged or discontinue the practice. If they do not discontinue it, they flit from one system to another and from one guru to another. So you should do both these systems at the same time. If you practise *pratyahara* for half an hour correctly, then do *dharana*, one-pointedness or formulation of your consciousness, for ten minutes; even five minutes will be qualitative and most successful.

17

Raja Yoga

Occidentale de Yoga, Paris, France

The practice of yoga one adopts depends on individual temperament and inclination. If you analyze the personality, you will find the human temperament can be broadly classified into four categories: dynamic, emotional, psychic and rational. These categories are found in an individual in varying degrees with certain aspects predominating. So, when we say a man is temperamentally dynamic, we mean he is predominantly dynamic, but at the same time he has in him the other aspects to lesser degrees. Thus, a person may be predominantly dynamic, emotional, psychic and rational respectively. The particular practice of yoga should be adopted, not according to fascination, but according to temperament. A person suffering from insomnia might improve his condition by certain yogic practices and these practices might become a compulsion with him because of his personal necessity. He may not be of a mystic temperament, but he will practise psychic sleep, which belongs to the mystical aspect of yoga, raja yoga. However, when you accept yoga as a lifelong practice, you must first analyze your temperament. Do not accept a yoga method just because once it did something good for you. Many people who follow the path of yoga suffer because they impose this idea of compulsion.

Raja yoga is a science of mental discipline. Man is a rational being and wants an explanation for everything he does. In my opinion, raja yoga must lead to *jnana*, knowledge. Generally, in this country and in the West, people practise raja and hatha yoga, despite their being predominantly intellectual, because the results are very good. Raja yoga is the most common among all yogas. A successful karma yogi has got to be a raja yogi. A bhakti yogi is more peaceful when he practises raja yoga. Similarly, a jnana yogi should also be a raja yogi.

Raja yoga is concerned with consciousness and the various stages of its manifestations: conscious, subconscious, unconscious and superconsciousness. In raja yoga the consciousness is seen in patterns and is known in Sanskrit as *chitta*, meaning awareness. In this particular context, chitta has three dimensions, namely gross, subtle, and casual (formless). The first or the gross dimension of awareness is the dimension of awareness where we see each other. According to raja yoga, in this first dimension of consciousness twenty principles are involved for gaining perceptual knowledge of the objective world. These are the five centres of action: vocal chords, hands, feet, genitals, anus; the five sources of knowledge: eyes, nose, ears, tongue, skin; the five types of vital energies: prana, apana, samana, udana and vyana; and the four mental principles: the thinking principle, the ego principle, the memory principle and the feeling principle. These are the nineteen, along with the twentieth principle – the light of consciousness. It is these twenty principles which make perceptual knowledge possible and enable the normal conscious experience and objective awareness, belonging to the first dimension of consciousness, to function.

The second dimension is the subconscious, known in the Vedas as the subtle. Here, impressions that are stored inside the memory (in the subconscious) assume different forms and are seen by the self. The third stage is the dimension of unconsciousness, where the objective world is lying in a dormant potential state. Raja yogis call it the causal state

and modern psychology calls it the state of unconsciousness. These are the three manifestations of consciousness, known as chitta.

According to raja yoga, in all the three stages there is one continuous, homogeneous mass of consciousness. This consciousness in raja yoga is termed by the Sanskrit word 'purusha'. *Purusha* means man, but it also means the outer lying consciousness. Purusha is composed of two words, 'puri' and 'sha'. *Puri* means city, and *sha* means to sleep. Thus, purusha means 'sleeping in the city'. This is the city of nine gates with one gate closed, i.e. our human body. In our body, the principle of consciousness functions through the senses, the vitality, the mind and the intellect, for this purusha is not free, it has to express itself through prakriti. *Prakriti* is mistranslated in the dictionaries as nature. Its real meaning is matter, creation, expression. Purusha expresses itself through ears; without ears you could not hear. If you lacked feet, a mouth or limbs, how could you express yourself? When this purusha manifests itself through the senses and mind, it is the gross purusha, and equivalent to the conscious mind of modern psychology. When purusha is aware of internal workings through the conscious science of memory, it is subtle purusha and can be equated with the subconscious state of modern psychology. When in deep dreamless sleep or under the influence of drugs a person is absolutely unconscious, then purusha or consciousness remains dormant in the body.

The purpose of raja yoga is to liberate purusha from the clutches of prakriti, or consciousness from its limiting adjuncts. To bring about this desired freedom, purusha has to withdraw from the three manifestations: conscious, subconscious and unconscious. Then follows the process of establishment in superconsciousness. It is something like ploughing land with a tractor and throwing away all the seeds, and then replanting the paddy, for raja yoga does this double action. How is this consciousness, this purusha liberated from the prison-hold of material expression, of prakriti?

Raja yoga recommends a twofold path for this purpose, the esoteric and the exoteric. Yama and niyama, asana and pranayama make up the exoteric, and pratyahara, dharana, meditation and samadhi form the esoteric. Another way of classifying the practice of raja yoga is that yama, niyama, asana, pranayama and pratyahara belong to the act of negation, whereas dharana, dhyana and samadhi belong to the act of expansion. Rishi Patanjali in his *Yoga Sutras* says meditation is that state of consciousness where the consciousness is not aware of objective phenomena. In other words, meditation is that stage where all the sense organs and mind are suspended and transcended. Yama, niyama, asana, pranayama and pratyahara, these fivefold exercises bring a state of withdrawal from conscious, subconscious and unconscious forces; and dharana, dhyana and samadhi assist in making the consciousness introverted in spite of its inherent outward tendency.

Now I shall discuss a few more points on raja yoga. The first concerns asanas. According to Patanjali, only steady and comfortable poses should be assumed by the aspirant in raja yoga and he recommends two asanas: *padmasana*, the lotus pose, and *siddhasana*, the adept's pose. In both these asanas, the spine is held vertical and erect, and the body can remain steady and motionless in deep meditation. These particular asanas also help indirectly in bringing about polarization of energies in the psychosomatic structure of the aspirant. A second point concerns pranayama. Different kinds of pranayama are mentioned in hatha yoga scriptures such as *bhastrika*, *kapalbhati*, *sheetali*, *sheetkari*, *nadi shodhana* and *ujjayi*, but in raja yoga only the last two types are prescribed for spiritual aspirants.

A number of methods, eighteen or twenty, such as pranayama, *trataka* and concentration are suggested in raja yoga for withdrawal of consciousness, but of all these methods *japa*, which consists of repeating a word or set of words, is the most effective.

Dharana, which in Sanskrit means 'to hold', is the next important step in raja yoga and involves holding the

awareness on an object for a length of time. Dharana does not mean imagination or any visual conception. When mastered, dharana merges into dhyana or meditation. Where drowsiness ends and sleep begins cannot be demarcated, and the same is true of dharana and dhyana. Only when the consciousness is able to retain a particular pattern for a fairly long time, without it being displaced by any dissimilar pattern of awareness, does the process of dharana become dhyana.

If, with closed eyes, you can hold the image of *Om* in front of you without it being superseded by any other foreign thought, such as the thought of a cross, of Ram or by the thought 'I am meditating, the meditation is going on'; if there is an obtrusive awareness of just *Om-Om-Om* in a continuous stream, then you will have achieved meditation. In meditation there is no double consciousness; there is only unified consciousness. The act of meditation involves a trinity: namely the meditator, the object of meditation and the process of meditation. This is the threefold awareness that one experiences during the state of meditation.

During the act of experiencing meditation, when you are actually practising concentration or holding a pattern of consciousness, a thought may come, perhaps relating to your practices. It will just emerge somewhere from your subconscious mind. Or sometimes you remain not only aware of a particular object of concentration, but awareness extends to some association, so you may be aware of the name of the object, or of the form of the object, or of its meaning, or your awareness may be a mixture of all three.

When your meditation becomes deeper and deeper, you will find that this diffused awareness becomes more and more clear. Suppose the object of concentration is a lotus. You understand it is a lotus because of its form, that is the first presentation of the awareness. When you go deeper you may no longer perceive form, but instead you perceive the name 'lotus', sometimes unaccompanied and sometimes accompanied by the form of the lotus. Meanwhile,

a bifurcated condition of awareness in its latent form will continue, so that while your consciousness is aware of the name and form of the lotus, at the same time it will not know what it is looking at.

Therefore, in dharana there occurs an automatic process of analysis where you negate all the confused forms which you have been unable to visualize from the pattern. The analysis proceeds this way. What is the definition of the lotus? Is the colour white the definition? Is something that blooms at night a lotus? Is it something that looks like a flower, a lotus? Or is it because English or Indian people call it a lotus, that it is a lotus? You will have to analyze that lotus, but it is impossible to intellectually analyze it. When you proceed like this you will see different aspects of a lotus, of Christ, of your guru, of *Om* – their names, forms and their archetypes, in the deeper stages of concentration. I shall give an illustration of a cow. We ask ourselves, what is a cow? Is that which gives milk a cow? Or is that which is worshipped by Hindus a cow, or that which walks on all four legs? These are the different aspects of every object and the awareness of these takes place spontaneously during meditation when you deeply analyze the object, but do you know what or whom the mind analyzes in dharana? Does it analyze a lotus or its own self? Only some people will understand this – it is actually self-analysis. Whether the symbol is a cross, your guru, *Om*, a crystal stone, a man, an animal or anything, ultimately in dharana the images that come in your mind are only consciousness.

In the process of dharana on a lotus you are trying to integrate the different parts of your personality, and while the image of the lotus is taking shape, you suddenly start to fight against some kind of conception which has no name and no form, but which seems to be underlying. It is just at that moment that you will achieve meditation. The awareness of the object is lost, although the object, the lotus, is still seen. You do not see the lotus as a flower or as something white, or as something floating on water, but you see the lotus just as a lotus. In other words you see the archetype of

the lotus, and it is exactly at that moment that meditation begins. After that no thought can interfere. Nothing can disturb you, you can keep on sitting; a bug or mosquito may bite you, the radio may be turned on full blast, your wife may call and the children may make a noise, but you experience no difficulty in maintaining the state.

The path of raja yoga is eightfold: yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana and samadhi. Therefore it is also known as eight-limbed or *ashtanga* yoga. After one has purified their life through karma yoga and accomplished one-pointedness of mind through bhakti yoga, he should approach a qualified teacher for instructions on the discipline of raja yoga.

There is an important sutra of raja yoga: *yogashchitta vritti nirodha*. The words mean: *chitta*, consciousness; *vritti*, the patterns; and *nirodha*, control – “Yoga is a science of complete control over all patterns of consciousness.” When consciousness goes from gross to abstract it is undergoing a process of involution. When the consciousness ceases to expand out towards the objective universe, but turns in to discover inner awareness, it is directed towards the point from where it originated. Then individual awareness has become isolated from all its associations and this state of isolated awareness is called *kaivalya*, which means ‘absoluteness’. So, the ultimate aim is to set into motion a process of involution of consciousness so that the consciousness becomes disassociated from all its limiting factors and shines just as pure consciousness, devoid of all its mediums.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

In our form of yoga, which was given by Adiguru Shankaracharya, we are related to our present guru, and not only to him but also to a chain of other gurus who are no longer on the earth. I was wondering if this is the case

in all forms of yoga, if it is true of your yoga for instance. Are you related only to your guru, Swami Sivananda, or to other gurus as well?

One must have only one guru; to have more gurus is to create a confusion in awareness, for it is the guru who becomes the light when the state of meditation dawns. The exact meaning of the word guru is 'dispeller of darkness'. Others are masters, not gurus; master meaning 'whose medium I am'. There seems to be a mediumship in us and we can become the medium of any higher or lower power. Deceased gurus are called higher masters, but our actual guru is the person who gives us the light. The guru is the guide.

Our guru died. Does this mean he is not guiding us now or is he still doing something for us?

If he is very powerful he can still guide you.

Can you make the distinction clearer between spiritual master and guru?

You see, the spiritual masters are astral powers who sometimes make the mind a medium. They enter into our consciousness and we become the mediums and act as they compel us, whereas the guru is one who is living physically and whose personality does not necessarily make you a medium, he is just a guide. You see, for years I was working as a medium of a higher power, but I had several problems especially with meditation, and therefore I found a living guru. Sometimes in invoking the astral masters, there is the danger that they might not come and instead we come under a state of self-hypnosis. I have seen many genuine cases, for instance when Madame Blavatsky was sitting, the masters came and they provided her with the sign, but most people get under the spell of hypnosis. They think they are the medium of the masters, but in fact they have become the medium of their own hypnotized consciousness, which is comparatively more powerful than ordinary consciousness.

As such they are sometimes able to speak clairvoyant things, these being expressions of their own subconscious mind. If a person becomes the medium of the higher masters or if he becomes the medium of his hypnotized consciousness, his spiritual progress is retarded and he can cause himself harm. When the masters want to make a medium, they come with a sign, there is a great difference between a master and the hypnotized consciousness, but if you have a spiritual master, you must also have a living guru.



18

Laya Yoga

Divine Life Society, Lisbon, Portugal

This is the first time I am speaking publicly on laya yoga, although I think it is not the first time you are hearing about laya yoga and its various techniques. However, what you will hear from me this evening may be a bit of disillusionment regarding your previous ideas about laya.

The Sanskrit word *laya* means dissolution, or melting into something. In what way does laya differ from samadhi? Why is laya different from superconsciousness? After all, all yogas should lead to a higher state where dissolution of lower consciousness takes place. This being so, every yoga is laya yoga. Whether your practice is pranayama, kriya yoga, meditation on God or your guru, when your individual consciousness merges into superconsciousness, it is in a state of dissolution or laya. However, although this is true, laya yoga is still a yoga by itself and we have to understand this now.

Superconsciousness is the ultimate aim for each and every individual, for superconsciousness is the ultimate state of our continuing process of evolution. In the superconscious state one does not become unconscious or lose individual consciousness, but one remains completely aware of all happenings both inside and outside. One has to travel with great alertness along the path that leads to superconsciousness so that the individual consciousness is

neither suspended nor dissolved, whereas in the practice of laya, individual consciousness is made to lose its contact with both the internal and the external.

The principle of *prakriti*, or the element of nature, formed by the three gunas sattwa, rajas and tamas, brings about disturbances or movements in the patterns of human consciousness. There are two ways of combating this: either you transcend the gunas, and transcend them so completely that you sit down at the level of superconsciousness or, instead of transcending them, you withdraw from them through laya and for some time you will be in meditation. In laya yoga the physical brain centres, the nervous system and also the centres of consciousness within the body are brought to a state of unconsciousness consciously, and you have complete and voluntary control over this process of dissolution of consciousness, or dissolution of the 'I'. It is similar to the ability to close your eyes and open and close and open them. In the same manner the laya yogi is able to manifest his consciousness, pass into complete unconsciousness and a complete state of dissolution of consciousness.

So, there are two types of yoga: one where nature or the gunas are transcended and another where nature, prakriti or the three gunas in the patterns of consciousness or in the general body of consciousness are dissolved. In a superconscious state you are aware of awareness, but in laya you are aware of unawareness. Superconsciousness is really difficult to achieve and it depends on your personal spiritual evolution, but this state can be forced on you. Through the practices of laya you can do this and bring about the desired changes in your physical, mental and spiritual condition. Laya is, of course, a very short-cut method, but it has to be learned with a teacher so you don't make mistakes. It is not at all difficult for us to do, but we must know pranayama and some kriyas.

Those who want to practice laya yoga should also do some hatha yoga first. This is very important. I do not mean

asanas and pranayamas, because hatha never means those. Classically, hatha yoga has nothing to do with asanas and pranayamas, but it consists of a series of cleansing techniques to bring about a balance between the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. Asana and pranayama form a part of tantra. Unfortunately, the modern yoga scholar and yoga scholars in the last century gave rise to this mistake because they thought it was better if they said they were practising yoga. I am sure that no yoga teacher in France has the courage to say, "I am teaching tantra." Instead he says, "I am teaching yoga." However, let me emphasize again, he is not teaching yoga, he is teaching only tantra, and asanas and pranayama form a most central part of the tantric system.

Hatha yoga consists of six systems: neti, basti, kapalbhati, dhauti, trataka and nauli. It is very important that the practitioner of laya yoga should practise neti. Neti is not just cleaning of the nose, but it also acts to irrigate and cool the optical system, the frontal brain, the entire glottis and the whole mouth. By the practice of neti, whether you use water, a rubber catheter, milk, butter or clarified butter, you awaken a certain gland situated in the interior of your nose behind the mucous membrane.

The next hatha practice you should do is dhauti. This includes kunjala where you drink water and vomit it out, and shankhaprakshalana where you drink about 16 glasses of salt water, perform a series of exercises and bring all your waste out through the anus. You clean your system so completely that finally you pass only the water you take in.

Then there is a kriya you should practise called kapalbhati. In kapalbhati 100 breaths should be done at one stretch. When you have completed the 100 rounds you should exhale completely, retaining the breath out, and then practise moola bandha, uddiyana bandha and jalandhara bandha. Then do another 100 rounds. Finally concentrate on *chidakasha*, the inner space which you see on the inner wall of your forehead. Here, in the West, kapalbhati is not



Australia



Singapore



Japan

USA





Belgium



Germany



Austria



Denmark

practised exactly according to the system we use in laya yoga, and only the other day I saw someone practising kapalbhathi with very hard exhalations. This is not the right way at all, even though it may be written in yoga books like that, for books are subject to different interpretations and misunderstanding. Practising 100 rounds of kapalbhathi is extremely simple provided you know how to do it correctly. I think everyone does it every morning unconsciously when they sniff to clean their nose. This is kapalbhathi. If you practise kapalbhathi you will discover that after 100 rounds practised 36 times, the mind merges. Practise kapalbhathi either in siddhasana or padmasana. Of course you can remember God on an easy chair also, I do agree, but in kapalbhathi you must have absolute control over the abdominal system.

When you are practising kapalbhathi the body should not move, and if you are doing kapalbhathi 100 rounds 36 times, your body should be like a statue. The kapalbhathi breath must proceed very gently. You should do it gently for 100 rounds and if you do it now you may achieve the first stage of laya here, at our Divine Life Society. It is better, if you want to try it, to prepare for my next visit in August, and your preparations should start one month before.

There is another misunderstanding I would like to clear up. People think that moola bandha is the control or the contraction of the anus, but it isn't and this mistake is even made in India. The word *moolabandha* actually means 'contraction of the perineum' and not contraction of the anus. The complete name of moola bandha is mooladhara bandha. The mooladhara is a chakra or psychic centre, and *bandha* means 'control'. Thus, contraction of the mooladhara chakra is abbreviated to moola bandha. Before you practise kapalbhathi you should master mooladhara bandha correctly. Some yoga books in European languages say the practice of ashwini mudra, contraction and expansion of the anal sphincter, will automatically include moola bandha, but ashwini mudra and moola bandha are different methods

and not the same. Ashwini mudra is the contraction of the anus, that is the sphincter muscle, whereas mooladhara bandha is control of the perineum in the male and, in the female, of the lowest part of the uterus. You should practice mooladhara bandha first and then go on to kapalbhati.

You must also know the proper method of jalandhara bandha, because I have seen from some pictures in different yoga books that they practise jalandhara bandha with the chin just touching the chest, but it should be pressed against the chest. I am telling you the correct techniques with reference to laya yoga and in your daily practice you may do what you like. Don't practise jalandhara bandha while standing: only practise in two asanas, the lotus pose and siddhasana. In this way jalandhara bandha will bring about total control of the thyroid gland, which is necessary for the practice of laya yoga.

Now I will discuss trataka, another method necessary for laya yoga. Trataka can be practised on a candle flame, on a black dot or on a big or small crystal ball. Crystals are transparent or opaque and in India are known as shiva lingams. There is a definite process for practising trataka, otherwise it may bring about awakening of your powerful psychic being. Therefore, even if you practise trataka only for curing eye trouble or for curing your insomnia, it should be done very correctly so you do not develop wrong psychic explosions.

Some, when practising trataka see hell, monsters, ghosts and such terrible things that they stop altogether. They suppose these manifestations to be actually real, but in fact they are just an expression of what is suppressed within. Therefore you should practise trataka according to the right system. In trataka, though your eyes are open you see nothing in front of you, and the perception of the object disappears in toto.

The most important hatha yoga practice is nauli. Nauli is intended to recharge and awaken the navel centre, solar plexus, or manipura chakra, which is vital in laya yoga.

When you have completed your practice of hatha yoga you are ready for laya yoga. You may know that the word *hatha* means *ida* and *pingala*, or the lunar and solar channels, the mental and vital energies and the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. Only when there exists complete balance of *ida* and *pingala* or of the nervous systems in the physical body are you ready for laya yoga. Otherwise you will probably get nervous imbalance from your practise of laya yoga and a sort of schizophrenia. Only the practice of hatha yoga brings the right balance, harmony and equilibrium in these two great nervous systems, and if you feel you can get along without hatha yoga and do not practise, the nervous imbalance of the sympathetic or the parasympathetic system will certainly manifest in laya yoga and you can become an idiot or extremely violent. Once you have achieved a balance in your nervous system, the practice of laya yoga involves a very important exercise that creates a state of total unconsciousness – voluntary unconsciousness. For this you must practice vajroli and two pranayamas known as moorchha and surya bheda pranayama.

Vajroli I shall not discuss in much detail and devote only a few minutes to it. Sit in siddhasana or in the lotus pose and close your eyes. First concentrate on the lowest part of the abdomen. Now contract your body in this area and go on contracting slowly so that the sexual organs are drawn upwards and pulled in. Do this stage by stage, starting with the pelvic region and slowly working upwards. Then release it as gradually as you withdrew it. Again you repeat the process. Vajroli should be practised while retaining the breath internally, in antar kumbhaka, so you breathe in and retain the breath, and it is very important that jalandhara bandha or the chin lock is performed at the same time. Continue practising this mudra, vajroli, as long as is practical for you or for as long as you have time.

After vajroli you should do moorchha and surya bheda pranayamas. You should remain seated throughout the whole of this practice. Next in your laya practice you should

do a kriya known as naumukhi in the tantric system. After naumukhi you do another kriya, also part of the tantric system, but I cannot tell it to you at this stage. When you have done these two kriyas for about ten minutes with eyes closed, you make a sound that must end with humming. It cannot be just the name of God. Chant *Om* for instance and go on humming *Ommm, Ommm*; the m should be maintained continuously for half an hour or for as long as is possible. It is while humming *Om* that you lose individual consciousness, and will be aware you have become unconscious. You will have complete knowledge of the whole fact of unconsciousness taking place, but you will be unaware you are humming *Om*. To any spectator it will sound as if you are groaning gently and it will be a very mild sound because your consciousness is now dissolving.

When you sleep at night in deep slumber, it is laya yoga also, but in that slumber state of laya, the brain, mind and consciousness are in a submerged condition. They are not stimulated, awake. However in actual laya yoga, the brain and consciousness are awake at a very high level when unconsciousness takes place, and laya really begins here. The laya state is no different from kundalini yoga, as there are many methods that can be practised and taught for the dissolution of individual consciousness at a very high level. When we say that an ordinary man sleeps on a bed but the yogi sleeps in heaven, we mean that the ordinary man becomes unconscious at a very low level of consciousness, whereas a laya yogi becomes unconscious at a very heightened and evolved level of his consciousness.

Two hours of practice in the morning are needed for laya yoga, and preparation takes a month. One should also allow a month for the actual learning of laya yoga kriyas. Then there are diet restrictions of all those foods that hinder the process of the human metabolism, and unless the metabolism is accelerated you cannot achieve laya yoga at any cost. For this reason a laya yogi abstains from milk, meat, chicken, fish and any other foods that stand in the

way of this metabolism acceleration. Also drug habits have to be avoided; they may bring about a state of calmness and serenity, but they interfere with the process of laya yoga.

In our scriptures on tantra, laya yoga is talked about with great respect, but laya yoga has one great disadvantage, and that is it takes you away from the self because it develops supernatural and extrasensory qualities in you. It may be due to the practice of kapalbhati, moorchha pranayama or vajroli, but laya definitely develops some of the ultrasonic or parapsychological brain centres, and siddhis are developed. All psychic powers, whether they are high or low in nature, divert the attention of human consciousness from the higher self, and siddhis constitute the greatest barrier. Therefore, laya yoga should only be practised with a guru and in his presence.

There are many minor instructions concerning laya yoga, small details I shall not discuss, but I will mention laya yoga should not be practised by an unmarried person. If you are not married and you want to practise laya yoga, you should first marry and then practise it. This is not a joke but is a very scientific truth that I am putting before you. You have to unburden the posterior pituitary from those congested progesterone and oestrogen hormones and eliminate them. There are certain toxins in the system in the stomach, in the blood, in the heart and lungs, in the muscles and bones, in the nervous system and brain, and only when you have eliminated all those toxins can laya yoga bring that serenity and calm, and total and homogeneous dissolution. I teach laya yoga but I never teach it to those who are celibate. There are many yogas such as bhakti yoga, kirtan yoga and japa yoga which I think all people can practise, but laya yoga is only for married people. There are other facts about laya yoga which I hope to tell you about next time.

19

Mantra Yoga

Paris, France

This morning I intend to give a kind of exposition on the science of mantra, a very ancient and interesting science. Firstly I would like to clear up a misunderstanding concerning mantra. It is commonly incorrectly thought or postulated that mantras are directly connected with gods and goddesses. If I ask someone to repeat the mantra *Ram*, he thinks I am asking him to repeat the name of a divinity worshipped by Hindus or a particular community. By this logic, the name of any god belonging to a particular community is a mantra, but this is not so. Mantras bear no relation to the names of gods and goddesses of a tribe or community, whether Hindu, Christian, Muslim or Buddhist. Rather, mantras should be understood as symbolic representations of a state of being, of revelation or realization.

The science of mantra is very ancient and reference to mantras is found in the oldest Vedic scriptures which great scholars of the East and West claim to be more than 5,000 years old. According to these ancient texts, mantra means a sound, or a combination or sequence of sounds which develops spontaneously, i.e. which spontaneously came to the person, rishi or seer as if dropped from heaven; a sound not produced by any man, woman or animal, nor by the hearer himself, but just heard. The vedic scriptures have a

word, *mantra drashta*, which literally means ‘the mantra seer or perceiver’, i.e. the person who perceived, visualized or realized the mantra sound in a very deep meditative state.

Later, during the period of bhakti, the rishis systematically developed this science of sound, of revealed mantra or of subconscious, unconscious or superconscious sound. The capacity of sound in man is known as *vak* in the Vedas of India, the ancient books of knowledge, in the Upanishads and in secret doctrines. The capacity of producing sound in different levels gives rise to the sounds of different dimensions, subtleties and ranges. Thus there exist definite sounds which we cannot always perceive because they are too gross or too subtle for us.

The ancient Indian texts divide the range of sound and mantra into four stages. The first stage is the gross sound, or *vaikhari*, which is revealed to our ears or auditory functions. This sound which I produce from inside me through my system of articulation and which is received by you through your auditory system is not subtle sound, rather it is a gross sound which is perceived and comprehended through your gross senses.

When the higher ranges of this sound are reduced to whispers and no sound is produced, but instead sound vibration is created in the form of whispering, it becomes the second stage or subtler range of sound that can only be heard with great attention and not by everybody. You use the sound of your breath, which you and the person sitting next to you can hear, but no-one else because of the limitations of the sound.

Now, when we think and the vibrations are produced inside the mind, it is the third range of sound. These thought vibrations I prefer to call speech, because you are speaking on a particular topic to yourself mentally, but in a way that you and nobody else can understand. When you think, “I don’t want to talk to that man”, you are producing the thought in speech form, as a formulated idea, and it is precisely the same as when you articulate it and say verbally,

“I don’t want to talk to that man”, so that another hears. In this third range you are only thinking mentally the same sentence; speech is there, idea is there, thought is there and sound is there, but the sound is mental, not physical.

These gradually subtler ranges of sound I have discussed are empirical, objective and gross; they are manifestations of your consciousness. They are the expressions of your ideas, your feelings, your knowledge, your good and bad qualities, your generous or selfish personality. When you transcend this gross consciousness and mind, you hear or realize certain sounds which are transcendental or heavenly sounds, or the voice of silence. These are the mantras, the revelation of the highest consciousness in a man revealed to rishis and seers, and which can also be revealed to me and you, and to those who achieve that highest state. Mantras do not have any practical meaning or relevance to your day-to-day thoughts, but they are expressions of transcendental awareness in the form of sound. Not only sound, but forms or images are also revealed. The sounds we know as the mantras and the images constitute our gods and goddesses. This is a little about the science of mantra, and now we come to the practicality or day-to-day use of mantras, their necessity and limitations.

Every mantra cannot be realized by everyone and everyone has a different mantra or different sound of his own. Just as your personality is the representation of your outer self, similarly the mantra represents your inner personality. There are many divisions to our personality: the physical, the intellectual, the emotional, the mental, the occult, the psychic and the superconscious – these are some. When we talk about the physical personality of a man we say he is tall or good looking; about his mental personality, he is stupid or is clever; about his emotional personality we say he is sensitive or he is thick skinned. When we speak about his psychic personality we say he is clairvoyant, he is telepathic, or he is none of these things; but about his occult personality we say, his form is a triangle, his mantra is *Om* or *Klim*. It is

through mantra that we realize our own occult personality. Development of the occult personality is the subject of tantra shastra. It is this occult personality which, in fact, we are. Your gross personality represents earth or hell, or an intermediate planet, but your occult personality is heaven. If one is in tune with his occult personality, it is said he has gone to heaven or he exists in heaven; and when one is in tune with his gross personality he is on earth or suffering hell. The understanding of one's own occult personality and the selection of a mantra is part of the science of mantra.

In order to discover your occult personality or mantra, you will have to refer to astrology, to the tantra shastra and to the science of elements and colours. You must also study the science of the three gunas or personal qualities: sattwa, rajas and tamas. All the personalities of the world come under these three types. We cannot be purely one or the other; either we are predominantly sattwic, predominantly rajasic or predominantly tamasic. First we must discover which we are.

Secondly, we must know with the help of astrology the birth sign under which we were born, the position of the sun, the position of the ascendant and other astrological facts such as whether you combine in yourself two qualities or possess only one quality of the sign, for you may have been born when a certain sign was departing and another was on the ascendant. Next, we must have an understanding of the elements. The order of these five elements according to their subtlety, purity and density is: earth, water, fire, air and ether. According to this occult science we are a creation and combination of these five cosmic elements. The predominate element is decided according to the birth sign and it is the element which decided the mantra to be picked. Thus all the mantras are classified into five categories.

Some mantras are for the earth element, others for fire, water, air and ether elements. *Om* belongs to the ether element; *Ram* to the fire element; *Gam* to the earth element; *Klim* to the water element and *Ham* to the air element. Every

mantra possesses a form also, known as *devata* which literally means 'god', but here means 'divine form'. Classified into these five groups there are many, many mantras. Every mantra has a colour, element, a devata or a subtle form and also a method of recitation. As I have already said, each mantra possesses two divisions – sound and form. For instance, *Klim* is a sound, a bija mantra, and it has an image which is revealed by a simple mantra. So, we have the bija mantra and the simple mantra – *Klim* is the bija mantra and *Krishna* and *Namaha* is the mantra which exposes the form. It is like this: when you explain the form to others you have to say something about the form and the explanation is long, and for this we have the simple mantra, whereas the bija mantra is the seed mantra and it is very powerful. Sometimes it is received spontaneously in meditation or it is given by the guru to the disciple.

I previously said that the element and the colour are chosen according to the birth sign and these decide the mantra to be fixed on, but it is not quite so easy, and sometimes even though the element and colour are correctly chosen according to the birth sign, your personality may conflict with the reality. If this is the case, the guru who knows your occult nature will have to reveal the mantra. When I am the possessor of the real mantra, the concentration, unification and the fusion of consciousness becomes easier, more spontaneous and more relaxed. If the mantra is not in the likeness of your personality, you will find it difficult to adjust yourself to it or to assimilate it, and you will be unable to lose yourself in the mantra just as oil cannot mix with water.

There are various methods of meditation and techniques of *japa*, of synchronization with breath and other yogic systems that help you assimilate the mantra in the structure of the occult personality. Eventually a time comes when your mind, or rather occult consciousness, can function in the form of the mantra. If your mantra is *Klim* and your consciousness is fused with *Klim*, your occult

consciousness then ceases to be occult consciousness but exists as *Klim*; your entire consciousness will be *Klim* and nothing other than *Klim*. Mantra has a twofold purpose: the first, as we have already stated, is to fuse awareness into the form of the mantra. When this has been achieved this mantra can become the vehicle or the transport agency for your consciousness, taking you to any person or place at will. It is said, in this way mantra specialists are able to get work accomplished with the help of the tantra shastra and other occult systems. This latter aspect is the creative aspect of the mantra; it becomes a kind of rocket and your idea, personality, consciousness and thought are fixed to it; then the mantra is projected outside and works as efficiently as an object. This is the applied science of mantra about which we know little. However, we are only concerned about the spiritual effect of mantra on your personality for meditation, and to induce one-pointedness, relaxation, knowledge and light.

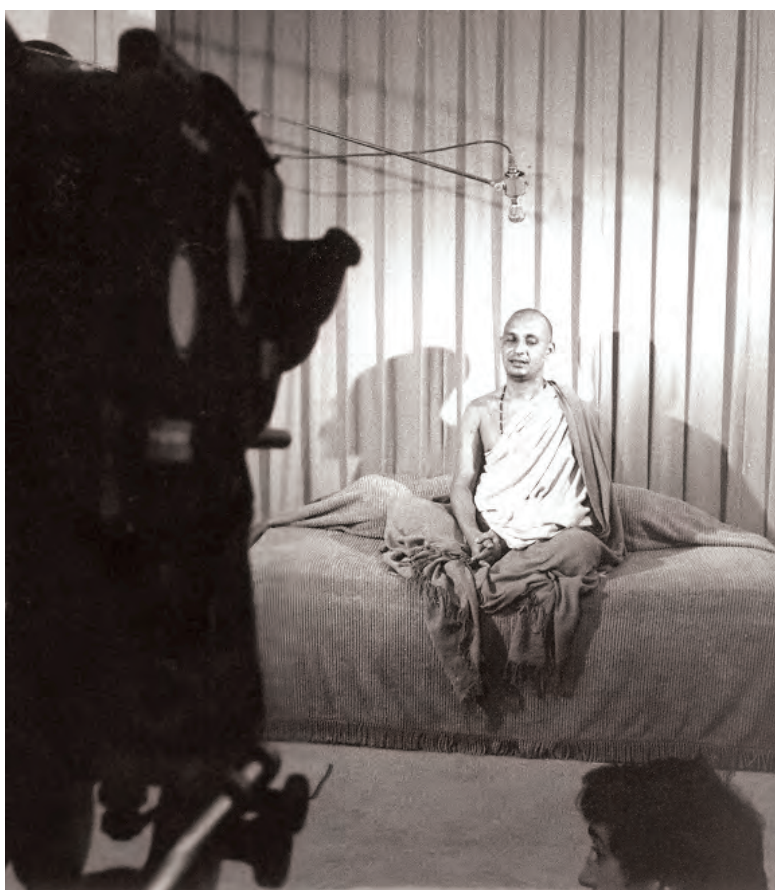
Mantra is the occult aspect of our personality, and as such mantra practice should be done with understanding and intelligence. The practical science of mantra is known as japa yoga. Here mantra can be practised mentally, in whispers or audibly; either using a mala or to the sound of a drum, to the heartbeat or pulse beat, rhythmically in a particular centre or with concentration on a certain colour or symbol. It is also suggested that the diet should be in accordance with the mantra and element. This is the common and practical science of mantra.

Mantra can also be used for the treatment of illness. Here the most effective mantra must be known in relation to the physical ailment. I may belong to the water element, so my mantra will be *Klim* and my form will be of the water element, but I may be suffering from a kidney disease which badly affects me, or my body swells up, or I may have pleurisy or dropsy. In these cases the mantra physician should change my mantra from *Klim* to a mantra beneficial to the disease or to the karma that I am suffering from.

How does the occult affect diet? People of the ether element should only take food in a pre-digested state, while people of the earth and fire elements can take meat. In India, the worshippers of Devi, Kali and Durga, or the worshippers of Shiva, the Shaivites, are permitted animal protein, but the worshippers of Vishnu, who is the divinity of water, or the worshippers of Rama and Krishna, are prohibited all kinds of meat. I am not joking. Sometimes when you visit an Indian house, you are asked if you are a Vaishnavite or Shaivite to discover whether you are vegetarian or non-vegetarian. Both the earth and the fire elements are strong elements and thus if I belong to the earth element I am stout in body, or if I belong to the fire element I am hot in body, my metabolism will be accelerated and any diet can be digested easily. Sannyasins are prohibited alcohol and meat, or any foods that cause excitement. This is because they are of the ether element, and for them pre-digested foodstuffs are permitted sanction. According to the system, people of the ether element will be calm, quiet and tranquil; people of the earth element will be just the opposite, cruel, strong and overfed; people of water and air elements will be emotional, sensitive and fickle-minded; and fire element people will always be intelligent and strong.

It is said a child should receive his first mantra when he is eight years old. He should not practise mantra as we older people do, but he should repeat his mantra at sunrise and sunset along with breath awareness – five minutes in the morning and five minutes in the evening. This mantra practice will create a reorientation in his disturbed subconsciousness, contributed by his parents. He should receive his second mantra at his marriage or when a great change in his life, or a transition in his personality is taking place. This mantra should be an introduction to spiritual life, and also to responsibility and fixed-mindedness. When he becomes spiritual he should receive his third mantra; one who has spiritual inclinations should approach a guru and

the mantra given to him should help him lead the spiritual life, withdraw his mind and switch off his consciousness from the external world to within. Hindus have a fourth mantra also, which is given when a man is just dead or about to die. When a man's pranas and consciousness are being withdrawn, and all the lights are becoming extinguished, when his consciousness is functioning only a fraction, ideally then the fourth mantra is put into his ears and this mantra leads his soul to the next birth.



20

Kriya Yoga

National Museum, Copenhagen, Denmark

There is a school of yoga which concerns itself with the psychological circuits of mind, and emphasizes one-pointedness of concentration in meditation and the withdrawal of the mind from external objects. This system of yoga has become very popular all over the world and most people know something about it. The method is to look at an object, close the eyes, withdraw the mind, forget everything, enter into meditation and pass into samadhi. This is a very popular system of meditation, but has anyone practised it with success to this day?

If the practitioners of this type of meditation were taken to a scientist and he was to investigate the condition of their brain during this so-called meditation, it would reveal no remarkable change from normal consciousness. This would show that, although their mind is withdrawn from external objects, the state they experience is not meditation but sleep.

Concentration of mind or meditation practised with effort can never lead to real meditation, but only to tension and deep sleep. This is the problem of yoga and the problem everybody has come across who has been trying to practise meditation for a long time. I am going to talk about a different branch of yoga, which does not presuppose one-pointedness, concentration of mind or withdrawal of

consciousness from external phenomena. This branch of yoga is *kriya* yoga.

Kriya yoga is one of the easiest and most powerful of the methods known to us in yoga. The *kriya* practices neither demand one steady pose nor concentration of the mind; even if one is unable to concentrate on one point and the mind is just jumping all about, it does not matter in *kriya*; we let it do so. In fact, in *kriya* you are not trying to withdraw your mind to one-pointedness, but you are actually trying to make movements, you create motion in the realm of your mind. In *kriya* you do not concentrate the mind, but you move the mind from one point to another in a particular order, which you should not lose sight of.

The word *kriya* means mental activity or activity of consciousness. In contrast to the other branches of yoga, in *kriya* you are not trying to quieten the mind, but to create activity in the mind. This brings about the development of certain parts of the brain, activity in the nervous system and awakening of mental energies.

The practices of *kriya* are described in the Sanskrit texts of tantric literature, a few of which were translated by Sir John Woodroffe and which are now available in French, German and English. The total number of *kriya* practices is seventy-six. Out of these, twenty-seven are already known to most teachers of *kriya*. We can begin with five or seven *kriyas*, but those who are eager to do *kriya* yoga itself will have to go through much preparation before they can even plan to learn it, or before they need a teacher.

The preparations for *kriya* yoga are perfection of breath consciousness, discovery of the psychic passage and preliminary *kriya* methods. Also, the aspirant of *kriya* yoga should have proficiency in a few *mudras* and *bandhas*.

First, I will explain breath consciousness in a few words. With your eyes open or closed, with your mind concentrated or oscillating, in lotus posture, standing or sitting, as you like, just become aware of the fact, "I am breathing in and I am breathing out." Keep this consciousness of breath

uninterruptedly for three minutes at one stretch and then make a break. You don't have to sit separately or exclusively for meditation. Even now while you are listening to my speech you can maintain this awareness of your breath uninterruptedly and then, after three minutes, you can stop breath awareness.

When you are aware of breath you are aware of your mind; awareness of your breath is awareness of your own consciousness and it is awareness of your awareness. Whether you concentrate or not it does not matter, but remember the moment that you become aware of your mind, of your consciousness, you are aware of your awareness. This point you must remember again and again.

The next preparation is to discover the psychic passage, the pathway or road through which the breath, or psychic consciousness, can flow up and down. The path is the spinal cord from the bottom to top, to the point where the pineal gland is situated. In this psychic path you practise the conscious breathing with eyes open, and most important you develop a consciousness of movement. There must be awareness of movement, up and down, and this movement is called kriya in yoga.

By this circulation of mind and consciousness from bottom to top and from top to bottom of the spinal cord, we awaken vitality and a magnetic current there; also we bring about revitalization of the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems which control the whole nervous balance. So, I have described one of the kriya practices. We pass our awareness from the bottom to the top of the spinal cord fifty times. This practice is very beneficial for people who suffer from mental breakdown, nervous imbalance, neurosis, anxiety and nervous trembling.

At the base of the spine there is a very important centre which in yoga is known as mooladhara chakra, and it is situated in the perineum, i.e. in the area between the urinary and excretory systems. This is a very vital point and organ in the body.

The parasympathetic nervous system connects the brain with the rest of the body through two centres. One centre is mooladhara chakra and from here impulses are conducted through the parasympathetic nervous system right into the brain. At the top of the spinal cord is the other very important conducting centre – the pineal gland, which in yoga we call ajna chakra. Thus, ajna chakra and mooladhara chakra are both carriers of impulses to the brain. The impulses travel through the parasympathetic nervous system, which controls the whole endocrine system of the body.

In addition to these two vital centres at the base and top of the spine there are other centres situated in the spinal cord: swadhisthana in the sacral region, manipura in the solar plexus region, anahata in the cardiac region and vishuddhi in the cervical region. These are four very vital centres in the body and these connect the brain with the body through the sympathetic nervous system.

The influx of our body sensations is carried from these four spinal centres via the sympathetic nervous system, and from the mooladhara and ajna centres via the parasympathetic nervous system to the brain. These centres carry *shakti*, or vital energy, and we stimulate this shakti by breathing in and out through this psychic path of the spine. The name of this practice, which is preparatory to kriya yoga, is ajapa japa.

The next preparation is the practice of mudras and bandhas. You must master them very well. The important bandhas are jalandhara bandha or locking the chin, uddiyana bandha or withdrawing the sacral plexus, and moola bandha, or controlling the inflexions of the mooladhara chakra, the base centre. When one completes these preparations he can start the practices of kriya yoga with a master who knows the science very well and who can teach him what he needs out of the seventy-six or the twenty-seven kriya techniques.

I have been engaged in much research into the influence of yoga on the human body and brain, and I have had some

very encouraging results. For instance, I have sometimes given kriyas to people suffering from suicidal complexes and terrific neuroses. I did not teach them the whole of kriya yoga, but just one or two kriyas and from their practise they gained a new lease of life. I shall not go into deeper details of kriya yoga, but I shall just give you a very simple technique. Sit in any asana, padmasana, lotus pose, or siddhasana, are best. Place both your hands on the knees and do nothing but concentrate on the perineum, the area between the excretory and the urinary systems. Very slowly contract it and then very slowly release it. Do this fifty times and then see what has happened to your depression. I wonder if you will suffer from depression ever again.

This technique of moola bandha is not very difficult and is not actual kriya yoga, but it is most important in that it awakens the vitality or the *prana shakti*, which is lying dormant at the bottom point of the spine in all of us. This vitality is known as kundalini or the serpent power. I am giving this technique especially to those people suffering from nervous disorders and breakdowns, and the resulting tendency to commit suicide and to do all kinds of things to escape from life. I also suggest that people who have very restless and disturbed minds, who cannot concentrate even for a fraction of a second, should practice this technique. If, after practising this, their mind is still agitated, they should try another exercise – vajroli. Here, one concentrates on the lower abdomen or at the base of the urinary system and slowly draws in the body there. Draw in the bladder, urinary system, kidneys and the whole of that area and then slowly relax it. One should contract and relax that area twenty-five times. Those who suffer from serious disorders, physical, mental and emotional, caused by sex neurosis or from problems with hormones, e.g. blocks in hormone secretions, should practise this particular kriya or movement. This is because the pituitary gland, correlating with sahasrara chakra, is connected with the functioning of the urinary system, the kidneys and the genito-ovarian

system. The posterior lobe of the pituitary produces two kinds of hormones and, by doing this particular kriya, you not only control these particular organs in the lower body, but you also control and regulate the hormone secretion in the brain.

There is nothing secret in kriya yoga. I could tell you everything about it tonight, but one night is not enough. I need at least seven days to teach you and for certain I shall not teach it to you on this visit.

It is a common idea there is something secret in kriya yoga which the masters keep to themselves and that everybody is not qualified for kriya practice. This is a myth. Also, it is commonly believed kriya yoga should not be practised by householders or married people who do not keep brahmacharya or so-called celibacy. If this were so, I think that not only no man in Denmark but no man in the whole world would be qualified for kriya yoga.

It is my belief the state of celibacy is unrelated to sexual life, but that *brahmacharya* means the conservation of the highest vitality, not in the genital region, but in the brain. The posterior pituitary produces hormones which are conducted to the gonads and ovaries and these produce the whole of what we call the marital and sexual life. It is therefore what happens in the brain which is of great importance, not what you lose in the sexual act. These hormones within the brain can be preserved, not by so-called brahmacharya or philosophy, but only by concentration or meditation or by the very powerful forms of vitality generated through kriya yoga.

Therefore it is a complete misunderstanding that kriya yoga, or any other yoga, is only for unmarried people and forbidden for those leading the marital life. It is not at all so. In the system of tantra, which contains much concerning kriya yoga, this is stated very clearly. It says, "Whether those who aspire for the awakening of the great shakti in themselves are married or unmarried, they are qualified for initiation into the practices of kriya yoga."

I have been conducting classes for years on concentration and meditation, and also classes in kriya yoga. There seems to be a remarkable difference between the two. After five minutes of concentration and meditation, people start scratching and moving, and simply get tired. But when in kriya yoga I ask them not to close their eyes or concentrate, and to move their body when they like, you will be surprised to hear that after twelve minutes they close their eyes and go into meditation and I have to pull them out of meditation. This is the remarkable difference between the systems of concentration and meditation and kriya yoga, which involves the movement of consciousness.

In kriya yoga there are certain techniques for movement of consciousness when I will ask you: "Please do not close your eyes during these exercises," but I assure you after fifteen minutes your eyes will be closed and if I ask you what you are doing you will say, "Swamiji, I am in a mood of meditation I cannot go further with this kriya. It is impossible." I say, "No, please keep your eyes open and do not go into meditation. Remain out, do not go in." But you will say "Swamiji, please let me go in, I can't remain out." Have you ever known a system of meditation like kriya yoga, where in spite of the pull of the guru, the disciple is just pushing himself inside?

Kriya yoga practices are casual, neither very systematic nor very serious. You do not sit down and tense your body, no! The kriyas are as casual as when you talk to your son or husband or wife or when you read some book. In that same casual, relaxed way you sit down and start moving your consciousness.

What I am about to say is not in favour of LSD, don't mistake me, but those who have had LSD experiences, when they practise kriya yoga, say that at the end of kriya practice they have a good trip. However, whereas the LSD trip is not under one's control, in kriya yoga he is in complete control. Just as the astronauts are brought back from the moon, you can bring your mind back from its heightened state to

normal work at any moment. In kriya, the bindings of time and space are transcended but not the awareness; you are not lost in that so-called unknown and delusive eternity, your feet are completely and firmly planted. If you have no particular job to do and no responsibility and obligation towards your family, job and business, the moment you have finished kriya yoga practices you can sit in meditation for ten hours, no problem; and if you do have responsibilities towards your family, job and children, then you are quite ready to take part in day-to-day life again. It is in this that the trip is completely under your control.

When I first came across kriya yoga it was a very wonderful experience, but I did not teach it because I thought people were not in need of this science. One day a very unfortunate lady of very high family came to me. She asked if I had a way in yoga for committing suicide. I invited her to come and visit me if she liked. Sometimes in the morning when I used to practise a few items of kriya yoga, she also practised them for fifteen to twenty minutes. This was many, many years ago, and now she has become one of the happiest women I have ever seen in my life, and she has not become useful to herself alone, but to thousands of people through community work. The money which she was wasting in clubs and other diversions, she is now investing in most useful projects. It is my belief that the whole change in her personality, and its awakening and revival were due only to the few very insignificant kriyas which she practised with me during those two or three months.

So, there are two different systems of yoga. One is the concentration, meditation and samadhi achieved by withdrawal of the mind from external life. If you can do this system, please go on with it, but if you cannot and your mind plays up like a rebellious child, then it is much better to adopt the second system and thereby preclude any friction and difficulty with the mind. Take a few kriyas, not many – five to ten and these will help you to deal directly with the rebellious mind.

When I was in Paris this year, I gave kriya classes for three days. The people were so greatly benefited that after only three months they wanted me to give more classes in kriya to hundreds of students. When I asked them what made them decide to call me back to Paris so soon, their reply was, “The kriya yoga my uncle, my brother or my husband has been practising has created such a great change in his life that I also want to learn and be benefited by kriya.” This is the reply of the people in Paris where I gave the first kriya yoga classes outside India.

Those who are eager to follow this systematic kriya yoga path should first practise asanas, pranayamas, some hatha yoga, some preliminary kriyas, ajapa jap, breath consciousness, mudras and bandhas regularly for four or five months and then they should learn kriya yoga from a qualified master.

Diet, status, creed or religious affiliations, age (young or old), mental condition (normal or abnormal), none of these are a barrier to kriya practice. If you are convinced that kriya yoga is for you, you should take it up. Start the preparations immediately.

Kriya yoga is part of tantra and it is on the subject of tantra shastra I shall speak tomorrow evening. Then you will know how close you are to a science given to mankind more than 6,000 years ago, and you will understand how, in this age of tension, dissension and all kinds of social and mental problems, the tantra system, but kriya yoga above all, can help us in our physical and mental difficulties and finally in the unfoldment of our consciousness.

21

Kundalini Yoga

Sweden

All the practices of yoga can be divided into three groups. The first group of yoga techniques brings about a state similar to hypnotism, where awareness of external phenomena is diminished. The second group creates a state of expansion of awareness through the psychological and psychic process. The third group of yogic techniques, with which we are concerned today, are very powerful methods in meditation. They are not concerned with psychological processes, but they act through the physical muscles or glands of the body.

The first group brings about a stage of suspension in the consciousness of the aspirant and eventually a particular state known as jada samadi, which appears like rigor mortis. The meditation techniques of the second group create an expansion of consciousness, where the aspirant of yoga experiences an evolution within his psychological system, which occurs independently of the body. In the third group, however, the aspirant develops certain faculties and glands in the body, and brings about a change in the body cells.

According to the experience of great yogis, in the physical body there exist certain muscles, glands and physical organs which, in the course of the natural process of evolution, have to come into manifestation, but at present in most of us they lie dormant. Meditation can be induced by

certain psychological or psychosomatic processes, but people who find difficulty in processing through the entire course of psychosomatic processes can achieve the higher state of meditation by awakening various physical psychosomatic glands in the body, which possess in themselves a certain dormant energy. This latter yogic method is known as kundalini yoga, and kundalini yoga is considered one of the most powerful ways to awaken the dormant faculties lying embedded in the physical structure of man.

Even the physical brain is not fully awake, only a ninth of its potential functions in us and eight-ninths remain sleeping. Who knows, if we possessed the ability to operate these sleeping centres within the brain, we might be able to achieve a great deal with its mysterious knowledge and powers. In fact, the 'dormant' centres of the brain are not sleeping but are awake. Events and knowledge take place in those areas, but our conscious field of perception and senses are not aware of or in contact with these unconscious areas in the individual personality. As such, whatever knowledge is gathered in our unconscious field is not circulated or communicated to our conscious field.

Through kundalini yoga we can bring about union between our conscious field and this unconscious field, which causes the knowledge taking place in the unconscious field to become communicated to our intellect, mind and our conscious knowledge. By kundalini yoga we can awaken the different circuits and different centres, and by operating with these centres we can directly operate upon the dormant and hidden areas of the brain.

Below the terminal point of the spinal cord, between the genital and urinary systems, a little deeper than the area of the perineum, lies a gland which is an extension of the spinal cord. This gland is lying dormant and it needs a kind of push or awakening. In yoga shastra this gland is known as mooladhara chakra or base centre. If this particular physical organ, which is the seat of astral manifestation, is awakened, not by hammering it unnaturally but by using

definite yogic methods in which pranic force or vital energy is injected and circulated in the organ, the psychic, spiritual and occult faculties contained in the mooladhara begin to manifest. This particular muscle, organ, gland, chakra, nerve centre or whatever you may call it, is believed in yoga to be the basic centre where the vital energy lies coiled and which when aroused starts to ascend in the spinal cord to the other psychic centres.

The next psychic centre is located at the base of the spinal cord where the tailbone springs; its name is *swadhisthana*, meaning 'one's own abode'. The third centre, or *manipura* chakra, is behind the navel in the spinal cord; its name means the 'city of jewels'. The fourth centre, also in the spinal cord, is located behind the heart; its name is *anahata chakra*, the 'centre of unbeaten sound'. The fifth spinal centre is in the neck; its name is *vishuddhi chakra*, the 'centre of purification'. The sixth centre is at the top of the spinal cord, in the centre of the pineal gland; its name is *ajna* chakra, which means 'order', and it is the place of knowledge, where knowledge is received as an order or command.

At the back of the head, where Hindu priests usually wear a tuft of longer hair, is a less known centre, its name is *bindu visarga*, which means 'the point of the dripping nectar'. At the top of the head just below the fontanel is the final chakra, known as *sahasrara chakra*, the 'centre of the one thousand-petalled lotus flower'.

These centres or chakras are lying dormant and inactive. The spiritual aspirant tries to awaken this vital energy at the base of the spine so that it penetrates through these centres, one by one. Just as an electrician joins the active wire to the bulb or fan to make them function, so the aspirant, by connecting the regenerated and awakened energy with these centres, makes them active and manifests their spiritual potential.

If the aspirant fulfils all the necessary conditions, then this awakening of kundalini power is the yoga method, but the practice of kundalini yoga demands absolute conditions.

One of the practices to encourage the manifestation of the awakening energy is moola bandha, where the perineum is contracted. In moola bandha, when the energy explodes, the whole body is held under control. In normal circumstances the muscular activity of our body is, as it were, contracted and controlled in a kind of lock and it is very difficult for us to release that lock. The greatest difficulty faced in the beginning of kundalini practice, therefore, is how to release and relax this lock. It is as if your rectum is locked, your spinal cord is locked, your intestinal peristalsis is locked, your every muscular action of expansion and contraction is locked, even the muscles of the cerebrum are locked. Unless the guru is by the side of the aspirant when he releases this series of locks, he will land himself in trouble. The methods to awaken the kundalini are kriya techniques which are always handed down from guru to disciple.

The practice of kundalini yoga demands an absolutely pure body. Therefore, the hatha techniques, the six purificatory processes, are absolutely essential. Also, a careful attitude concerning the diet is absolutely essential for during kundalini awakening any gases stored up in the intestines will make their way upwards and will compress the heart. So, if the diet is conducive to gas, instead of experiencing spiritual illumination, the aspirant might suffer intense heart pain.

If a spiritual aspirant follows these rules when his energy awakens, it should pass through the different centres without difficulty. However, the fusion of individual energy with the cosmic energy does not take place in one day; it takes months and years. The awakened energy may remain in the same area of the body for months together and you may have certain sensations – heat, electricity and magnetism trying to rouse itself but nothing happens; it just remains there and in some cases may slowly die away. The aspirant who is experiencing those sensations should understand that they could be only subjective sensations and bear no relation to kundalini practice, and he should double-check by watching his behaviour and actions at the time of these

sensations. One's behaviour during the awakening may become abnormal and he will experience anger, heavy sleep, lethargy, too much energy, intuitive flashes, too much sympathetic understanding, over-sensitivity or complete dullness. All these are the different symptoms which occur at the different stages of kundalini arousal and which follow these sensations. Therefore, the occurrence of the sensations should not be considered final proof of kundalini awakening unless these behavioural symptoms accompany them. In a few rare cases, the energy or power just shoots up to a higher centre instead of manifesting itself in the lower centres, but this seldom happens.

This kundalini power, manifesting itself in the form of symptoms and sensations, gradually rises up during a period of weeks to the next centre and then again descends. Purity, intensity and spiritual stamina in the aspirant are very important here.

If the subconscious mind of the aspirant is very disturbed and he suffers from uncorrected and unfulfilled inhibitions, the kundalini energy will descend again, and once more he is an ordinary man. Until it reaches the third chakra, manipura, the energy can rise and descend at any time, but once it goes beyond manipura there is no possibility of its falling down again. On the path up to the third chakra there are many temptations, and spiritual aspirants are side-tracked by the miraculous powers of the intuitive flashes they might receive. Some practise healing, others develop miraculous methods of expressing this aroused inner power, but their kundalini will cease to ascend.

22

The Alchemy of Meditation

Prague, Czech Republic

Surely the ultimate purpose in the life of every human being is to make himself more perfect and to be in constant communion with his higher self. To achieve this, man must take to the spiritual path, which requires courage and boldness, but once you start upon the spiritual life, the vicissitudes of life can be overcome. All the frightful melodies of life will stop playing. The emotional disorders, the lack of purpose, the distractions of the mind, anxieties, worries and erratic behaviour will cease. Spiritual life takes you from the 'outside' to the 'inside'.

The outer individual consciousness, the human awareness which is always in tune with outer surroundings, the sense life, is drawn within and made to penetrate the veils of darkness by the incessant practise of awareness. When the little individual consciousness goes beyond this consciousness or body consciousness, it rises to higher consciousness, to become united with Supreme Consciousness. Our present dimension of consciousness is finite, limited, changing. So long as we remain in this dimension of consciousness we are subject to mental vicissitudes and emotional crises, but when sense consciousness is transcended, although you see the troubles of life, the causes and effects, you see them as from a great distance and they will not seem to be happening to

you. In this way spiritual life removes us from all difficulties, real and imaginary, and especially from psychological fears and anxieties. It makes you more objective and less subjective.

One needs one single cohesive plan for passing from outer to inner awareness, from the individual to the cosmic, from senses to spirit, from change to changelessness and from duality to permanent bliss, ananda. The whole programme, whatever it is, asanas, pranayama, hatha, or meditation, must be blue-printed. You should have a master plan and that plan is yoga. Yoga brings about a meeting point in the personalities of man, which have always been in conflict and separate. Our individual self, jivatma, is always unaware of the Supreme Self, paramatma, but the way they can unite is through yoga.

In yoga we especially try to accomplish two objects: one is to unite with the higher consciousness with full speed and the other, which is of more primary importance, is to remove obstacles and disturbances, and establish inner tranquillity and peace so that our journey is successful.

Of course, it is not so simple to unite with the higher consciousness. The senses must be quieted and the underlying disturbances in the mind must be annihilated. The mind must attain peace and tranquillity. This process is known as pratyahara; it is an act of withdrawal, of tranquillity and serenity, enabling you to transcend the outer dimensions of your personality. Many try to meditate but find it impossible. Why? If meditation is successful your mind has to be happy and peaceful. If you ask me to sing a song you like, but when I sing your friend cries, the song is not heard for the noise. It is the same in meditation. I want to experience my consciousness and see the image of my guru, or of Om, but my mind makes so much mischief that meditation can't take place. You have to put this situation right first, before you can start penetrating layer after layer of consciousness and experience what lies within. Everything that has ever been said about how wonderful

yoga is, is true. It takes you into the deepest parts and resources of your awareness.

Of course, yoga fulfils purposes besides enlightenment. Yoga is also a panacea for the so-called frailties of man. Deeply embedded in your subconscious mind are deep impressions, inhibitions, complexes and phobias, and various disturbing patterns of consciousness which you have been accumulating for years and lives. You have been accumulating experiences, bitter, sweet and mixed, and the experiences or samskaras are innumerable. Whenever you commit a blunder, or feel sorry, or feel peace or exhilaration, or worry or anxiety, this is a manifestation of the inner mind or a manifestation of the impressions within which have reached maturation point and want expression.

There are certain impressions from this life and previous lives which are lying at present at the threshold of your mind and these samskaras are trying to find an outlet for elimination. The moment you sit down for meditation many thoughts or impressions arise. The purpose is to eliminate these thoughts in such a way that you don't effect another act of accumulation. Our whole purpose in yoga is to elevate the thoughts of our conscious mind and purify our subconscious, and also to manifest the dark forces within us. For this reason even if people are not interested in gaining enlightenment, yoga serves them well by curing their mental and emotional difficulties, and in this way yoga is a panacea for the ills of society.

Our society has given us everything, abundant prosperity and total social security, everything except peace of mind. When a criminal or anarchical attitude develops, society had no answer for it, except perhaps a few tranquillizers or a whole bottle. We are filled with tensions and these give rise to diseases, cancer or heart trouble. For escapists, there are bars, theatres, television, movies and nightclubs. On the whole, these things are nothing but an escape from the realities of life; they are no cure, but rather the screen we erect to hide the realities.

If we try to cure misfortunes in life through material means, they only become more acute. It is here that yoga comes to the rescue as a treatment for the failures of society, for which science and culture have no answer. Coronary thrombosis is a disease of the people who succeed in life. When a man suffers a coronary attack the cure is obvious. He has to kick success but he is unable to do this for a variety of reasons he gives himself. A yogi definitely can kick success because he has faith in himself, but the so-called successful man suffers endless anxiety that he may lose his success. One who is given to yoga knows that the success he has is not really his, so he can't lose it. It is God's grace and will, so he is never anxious. If he fails, it is God's will. If success comes, he takes it from God, if it departs, he leaves the whole thing to God, and if it continues, he keeps it for God. This is how he makes his mind free. His entire personality is so relaxed that he does not accumulate one fraction of tension. For those who do not live on this higher plane it is as if they are travelling by plane or train and carrying their suitcases on their heads, and when someone inquires why they do this, they reply, they have to. We must change our whole philosophy. We spend our entire lives moving almost completely unconsciously. We don't know what we are doing. We have no clear idea even of our physical actions and does anyone really know what kind of thoughts go through his mind? No, because he is not aware. When people don't consciously think or consciously breathe or consciously act, then they are just unaware. However, the thoughts, actions and breathing go on. We must conclude there is some director of life's activities who is always conscious, and it is in yoga you become fully conscious of him. This is the basis of yoga and the whole culture of yoga springs from this concept.

Yoga is the heating and cooling system of the brain. You have air-conditioners and heaters in your homes, but you need them for the brain too. So that when you get heated ideas they are cooled off, and when you are too cool,

depressed and melancholy, your brain is heated up. You need a mental vacuum cleaner also. Every day, even if the doors and windows of your room are kept shut, dust will accumulate, and the mind has its own dust and dirt. You may close your eyes in mudras and bandhas to cleanse the body, but the karmas will remain and these karmas give rise to the dirt and impurities within. The fine impurities within you don't come from outside. It may surprise you to know that even if you don't do karma these mental toxins will still form, and because there is a fermenter in your mind, karma begets toxins, so impurities are inevitable. You need a vacuum cleaner to cleanse your mind every day and meditation is that vacuum cleaner that will sweep the mind clean.

Not only should the mind be cleaned, it also needs rest. Just as you provide your body with a comfortable bed after a long working day for eight hours sleep, the mind should also have rest periods so that it will be fresh. One hour of meditation, half an hour or fifteen minutes of asana, ten minutes of pranayama, are equal to hours and hours of sleep.

You have all the amenities to make your life comfortable, and not least, a nice kitchen. You touch the switch and everything necessary is at hand. You open a can, cook the food, have some soup, a salad, an omelette. You must have nourishment for your body, but you must also feed your mind with good nourishing thoughts. Modern man is starving amidst plenty, his mind is suffering from malnutrition. You can see what happens to your physical body when your diet is unbalanced: anaemia and jaundice occur. But what happens to your mind? You can't see it. Do you ever think you are mentally poor, mentally starving? Yoga feeds the mind, it cures mind-anaemia, mind-leukaemia, mind-cancer. You can inject your mind with good yogic medicine, the wisdom of the rishis and mahatmas, the wise men of India.

The yoga of ancient India is a life-living science. It is not an act of renunciation, escape or negation, but it is a means

by which we can correct the wrong notions we have formed about life. We don't have to reject society or renounce our personality. We need not renounce actions; even if we did we would still do them, if not physically, then mentally; the desire to do them would still be in our minds and mental actions are the more dangerous actions. We don't have to renounce karmas, we can do karmas. This is known as karma yoga. You don't have to renounce loving anyone or helping people. It is said in the *Bhagavad Gita* that these are acts of purification. Within your mind you must say, "I am a yogi. I practice yoga and I want to transform the values of the world. I don't want to annihilate anything." Live from moment to moment in the alchemy of meditation. Live the life of yoga with high principles with absolute faith in the higher spirit, whom we shall know through yoga when the ultimate aim of yoga is achieved – God-realization.



23

Yoga Nidra and Trataka

My name, Satyananda, is composed to two words: *satya*, or the unchanging, and *ananda*, or the ecstatic mood, ecstatic life and unchanging bliss. Swami means 'one who is master of himself.' As such my name, Swami Satyananda, is a universal name, it is everybody's name.

In spiritual life, when you visualize your own consciousness, you become aware of a whole stock of difficulties: mental, psychic, real, illusory and so on. Even the subconscious mind is disturbed, so if we try to concentrate on one particular point in meditation, the mind finds itself incapable and fails.

The *yoga shastra*, yoga scriptures, say the mind has threefold mental errors or defects. Broadly speaking, the first error is impurity, the second, misunderstanding or illusion, and the third is distraction or dissipation. These threefold errors in the mind are the cause of all tensions and anxieties, and they prevent us from enjoying a state of mental equilibrium. As such, even highly spiritual people who have renounced everything and have no contact with the world at large, suffer from an unquiet mind and cannot concentrate in meditation. These psychic disturbances, this psychic and physical imbalance, must be corrected. This is where yoga nidra, or psychic sleep, plays an important part in the scheme of yoga. This psychosomatic relaxation is known by westerners as only a method of relaxation, but in fact it aims at physical and mental balance.

Nidra in its corrupt form means sleep, but in Sanskrit it means complete relaxation; and *yoga* means union or one-pointedness. Thus, *yoga nidra* means relaxation by creating one-pointedness of mind. It also means relaxation of the personality by going inwards from outer experiences. Yoga nidra is particularly recommended for spiritual aspirants who suffer from tensions, anger, greed and other imbalances.

Sometimes, when you sit for meditation, concentration comes spontaneously, but at other times, despite your best efforts, you cannot concentrate. You may come back from your job, sit for meditation and just go to sleep. This is plainly not what is desired, but what can one do? You go to bed at 11 pm and you get up at 4 or 5 the following morning to meditate because this is the best time for meditation purposes. Between 11 pm and 4 am you have insufficient time for sleep, so the whole of the following day you are depressed and your mind disturbed. This is where yoga nidra comes in. Yoga nidra is a method by which the mind can receive maximum possible relaxation in a minimum amount of time. One hour of yoga nidra is equal to four hours sleep. It is also a very systematic method for the development of inner awareness and it is designed especially for beginners.

In yoga nidra one lies down on a bed, a blanket or a carpet with a blanket laid over it on the floor. A small pillow can be used if one likes and one relaxes the limbs. The legs should be apart and the hands a little away from the sides of your body, palms up. The eyes will be closed. The practice should be followed for one full hour.

In yoga nidra, during this full hour, you play a double role; you instruct yourself and simultaneously you are following what is being instructed. What exactly do we try to do in yoga nidra? We try to discipline and tranquillize the physical body. We relax the respiratory system, the bones, muscles, ligaments, circulatory system, brain and eyes – the entire physical body.

We develop a state of mind where all our emotions are brought to the surface. We can do this voluntarily. Even if I don't suffer from anger or jealousy, and love everyone and hate nobody, still I should try to bring my emotions to the surface and, whatever type they are, throw them out.

In yoga nidra we discipline our imagination, fantasies, feelings and sentiments to such a degree that we can induce the feeling of heat by simply producing the word 'heat' inside, and when we produce the word 'cold' inside, the whole body will begin to shiver with chill. In this way I discipline and control the sensations of my mind, and although there may be heat in this room, if I want to feel cold, the body experiences it. The power of the will is demonstrated in that, despite the fact the room is hot and we are fully aware of the heat, we can feel cold because we will to feel cold.

Using auto-suggestion, or with another person acting as instructor, using a tape recording, you should practise yoga nidra for one full hour.

The system of yoga nidra is very vast and much has been spoken and written about it. It includes hundreds of methods by which you can bring complete relaxation to every part of the body: in the muscles of the forehead, in the abdomen, in the kidneys and intestines or in the muscles of the thighs. In this lies the secret of self-healing; it comes with deep relaxation brought about through willpower.

It is best if the entire system and sequence of instructions of yoga nidra is properly recorded, and the words, the emphasis, the tone, the timing and the accent should never change from the first to the last day.

Yoga nidra is not only meant for the man who is absolutely tired out with physical and mental exertion. It is also for the man who is tired of taking rest. There are some people who sit in an easy chair the entire day, who ultimately develop what you might call psychological blood pressure. When they rise from their chair they experience a palpitation of heart and think they suffer from a heart disease. They are suffering from under-work. For these people the methods of yoga nidra

that rejuvenate and revive the physical, mental and emotional personality should be emphasised. Those people who are unable to exercise, eat a lot and who rest a large number of hours with nothing to do, need excitement or stimulation. Certain practices of yoga nidra can help them by inducing an extra influx of blood and energy. Other practices in yoga nidra are especially designed for people who suffer from physical and mental fatigue due to strain and overwork. In yoga nidra we deal with the underlying causes by which their physical, mental and emotional systems have reached this state of depression. Yoga nidra starts a whole process of retoning, reviving and repairing, and brings about a calm and quiet condition of the body, mind and emotions. Yoga nidra can also be used for higher meditation purposes.

Yoga nidra is a part of pratyahara, the fifth step of raja yoga. *Pratyahara* means withdrawal of consciousness from physical objects, and in yoga nidra sight is withdrawn from its objects of perception, hearing is withdrawn from sound and so on, until all the links with the physical senses become withdrawn. Therefore, yoga nidra is very useful for those who want to avoid fighting with the mind in their practice of meditation, and for tranquillizing their physical and psychosomatic condition.

There are a number of methods which create a balance in the psychosomatic condition. One of the easiest is *trataka*. If you practise *trataka* with dedication it will deepen your awareness and create an atmosphere of tranquillity in your mind before you sit down for meditation.

Trataka practice

Place a candle in front of you about an arm's length away and concentrate with open eyes on the flame of the candle, without flickering or winking the eyes for as long as is comfortable, but not to the point of shedding tears.

With the spinal cord erect and without moving the body, concentrate on the correct image of the flame, then after some time close the eyes.

When you close your eyes, try and see the counterpart of the flame, its reflection on the retina, in the area between the eyebrows. This luminous point or dot, like a tiny star, will appear and disappear. It will disappear and reappear until the dot is completely lost. Now open your eyes and again look at the flame. It is most important the flame is steady and unflickering.

Again, look at the flame without tension, but with full attention, for as long as is comfortable for the eyes without tiredness or strain. Then, again close the eyes and see that inner tiny star, which is easy because the retina will reflect the little star.

Continue to visualize that star for as long as you can. You will find the star moves upwards, which is good, because it brings you to a particular point, the point of the bhrumadhya, the eyebrow centre, an important centre in yoga.

It may be difficult when you start looking at this centre, but with practise it will come automatically, and when you find, after three or four rounds of trataka, that the mind has become tired or slightly dull, it is then that you start your meditation.

Both the practices of yoga nidra and trataka bring about a state of relaxation in the mind and a withdrawal of the mind from sense objects. Mental equilibrium is established in the mind by this state of one-pointedness. Concentration then comes spontaneously and consequently your meditation is spontaneous and successful.

Yoga nidra practice

Please get ready for yoga nidra.

Adjust your blankets or bed in the best possible manner. You must be able to practice yoga nidra for the whole period without any physical discomfort.

Adjust everything, your body position, everything.

You can make suitable movements now, but once you have adjusted yourself, the body should not move until yoga nidra is over.

Thereafter – no movement of any kind.
Become absolutely motionless.
Adjust yourself once and for all.
Concentrate on your physical body.
Concentrate on your physical body as a whole.
Be aware of the existence of your body.
Be aware of the existence of your body.
Develop awareness of your whole body from top to toe.
Develop awareness of your whole physical body from top to toe.
Your whole body.
Your whole body.
Your whole body should be the object of your awareness.
You are aware of the whole body, the physical being from top to toe.
Not merely awareness of the legs, or arms, or trunk, or chest or head alone, but awareness of the whole body.
Awareness of the body as a whole.
Complete and constant awareness of the whole body.
Be aware that you are going to practise yoga nidra and say mentally to yourself,
“I am aware that I am going to practise yoga nidra.
I am aware that I am going to practise yoga nidra.”
Go on repeating mentally and be sure that you are aware that you are going to practise yoga nidra.
This should be the form of your awareness now.
Relax your body mentally.
Relax yourself mentally, relax your mind.
Your whole personality should be relaxed through psychic breathing.
In alternate nostrils you are performing psychic breathing.
Your breath should be according to the procedure given in nadi shodhana pranayama.
Normal breathing through both nostrils.
With total awareness.
With complete awareness.

Breathe in through the left nostril and breathe out through the right.

Breathe in through the right and breathe out through the left.

Relax your breathing and resume normal breathing.

Breathing with concentration.

Go on practising psychic breathing.

This is how your whole personality will feel completely relaxed.

Not only the physical body, not merely your thinking process, but your entire personality should feel relaxed. Your mind and your consciousness should follow the rhythm of your breathing.

Total and complete synchronization between the movement of your breath and the movement of your consciousness.

You are able to relax yourself completely through this practice.

You will find a remarkable change will take place in your physical and mental awareness.

Your whole personality will undergo a process of relaxation if you follow psychic breathing, that is, breathing with full awareness.

Please check yourself and be sure that you are fully awake, that you are listening carefully to my instructions on yoga nidra and that you are not sleeping.

The sankalpa or resolve.

Your sankalpa should be simple and expressed in clear terms.

There should be no trace of anxiety in your expression of it.

Your resolve should be made with faith, devotion and sincerity.

The resolve made before and after yoga nidra is bound to yield fruits. It is sure to assume reality in your life.

Anything in life may miss the target, but not the resolve made before and after yoga nidra practice.

The same resolve, in the same language, understanding and with the same background. It must be repeated in each practice.

Remember your resolve in the beginning and also at the end of yoga nidra before you open your eyes.

The resolve, the sankalpa, is repeated three times at the commencement and three times before yoga nidra is completed.

Go on, go on repeating.

Yoga nidra begins now.

Now we shall begin the exercise with the physical body first.

Now rotate your consciousness on the physical frame as quickly as possible.

The awareness is to be shifted from limb to limb.

The whole process is to be carried out mentally.

On every limb of your body you should rotate your consciousness before proceeding to the next.

The name of the limbs and parts should be repeated mentally.

Right hand thumb, tip, nail, first joint, second joint and the root of the thumb.

Second finger, tip, nail, first joint, second joint and the root of the second finger.

Third finger, tip, nail, first joint, second joint and the root of the third finger.

Fourth finger, tip, nail, first joint, second joint and the root of the fourth finger.

Fifth finger, tip, nail, first joint, second joint and the root of the fifth finger.

Back of the hand, palm, mounts of the palm, Venus, Moon, Mercury, Sun, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, and the middle of the palm. Wrist, lower arm, inside of the lower arm, elbow, inside of the elbow, upper arm, inside of the upper arm, shoulder, armpit, right side of the chest, waist, hip, hamstring, thigh, knee, back of the knee, calf muscle, shin, right foot, ankle, heel, middle of the foot,

sole, ball of the foot, toes, big toe, tip, nail, first joint, the root of the big toe. Second toe, tip, nail, first joint, second joint, root of the second toe. Third toe, tip, nail, first joint, second joint, root of the third toe. Fourth toe, tip, nail, first joint, second joint, root of the fourth toe. Fifth toe, tip, nail, first joint, second joint, root of the fifth toe.

Go to the left side.

Left hand thumb, tip, nail, first joint, second joint and the root of the thumb.

Continue rotating your awareness through every part of the left side of the body, as described in the previous paragraph.

Now go the right shoulder blade, left shoulder blade, right buttock, left buttock, right side of the back, left side of the back, spinal cord, neck, whole of the back together, sahasrara, forehead, right eyebrow, left eyebrow, centre of eyebrows, right temple, left temple, right eye, left eye, right eyelid, left eyelid, right cheek, left cheek, right ear, left ear, nose, nose-tip, upper lip, lower lip, both lips together, tongue, chin and throat. Right chest, left chest, both together, hollow of the chest, heart, stomach, navel, abdomen, right leg, left leg, right arm, left arm, head, trunk, whole body, whole body, whole body, whole body.

Check your consciousness.

Be sure that you are listening to me.

You are not asleep.

You are aware.

Awaken the feeling of heaviness.

Become aware of the feeling of heaviness.

Awaken the feeling of heaviness in the right thumb, etc.

Awaken and become aware of the feeling of heaviness in all the parts of your body.

Heaviness in the whole body.

In the whole body (repeat four times).

Check your consciousness and be sure that you are not sleeping.

Be sure that you are not sleeping.
Be sure that you are listening to me and that you are wide awake.
Become aware of the feeling of lightness.
Become aware of the feeling of lightness.
Awaken the feeling of lightness.
Awaken the feeling of lightness in all the parts of the body (repeat as for heaviness).
Become aware that you are not sleeping, you are listening to me, that you are awake.
Please check your consciousness.
Awaken your willpower and experience the sensation of heat in your whole body.
Recollect the experience of heat.
Imagine that the body is exposed to the sensation of heat.
Recollect the experience of heat that you have had before and revive that experience of heat on the following parts of the body (repeat, going through all parts of the body as for the sensation of heaviness).
Feel that the whole body is hot, it is almost sweating, almost perspiring. Imagine that it is almost midsummer and that you are exposed to the rays of the blazing sun and, through imagination, experience the sensation of heat in the whole body, in the whole body, in the whole body.
Be sure that you are awake.
You are not sleeping.
You are listening to me.
The experience of cold.
Awaken the experience of cold.
Awaken the experience of cold in the body.
Awaken the experience of cold in the body.
Imagine that you are walking on the ice-cold floor during winter.
How would your body react?
That experience is to be revived.
Feel the cold, feel the cold, feel the cold (again go through all parts of the body).

Feel the cold in the whole of the body as if the body is freezing.

Feel cold in the body as if the body is getting colder and colder.

Imagine as if in the middle of winter you are sleeping outside without any covering over your body.

Recollect the feeling of cold and superimpose it on your body.

Say mentally, "I am freezing and my whole body is quivering due to the intense and excessive cold."

Then try again to awaken the feeling of cold in all the individual parts of the body.

Recollect any feeling of pain.

Recollect the pain clearly.

Recollect the pain clearly.

Through your imagination feel pain.

Awaken your willpower and relive the feeling, the experience of pain in the body.

Remember the sensation of pain that you had experienced in the past.

Feel the pain again.

Quickly take your mind to that sensation and feel it.

The feeling of pain awakens your sleeping consciousness.

Collect the scattered rays of your mind and experience the sensation of pain.

The feeling of pain in any part of the body or the whole body is to be felt intensely.

Now contemplate on the feeling of pleasure.

Experience the feeling of pleasure, any pleasure which you have experienced in the past.

One which you can easily recollect and relive.

Contemplate on any pleasure.

Contemplate on any pleasure.

Contemplate on any pleasure, so much that the pleasure sensation should become vibrant and alive in the present.

Go deep into your awareness and direct the will to feel the pleasure.

It should be brought immediately before the mind.
 And you should contemplate on it.
 Become one with the experience of pleasure.
 You should go deep into your awareness by assembling
 the scattered energies of the will and then directing
 them to pleasurable sensations.
 Check your awareness.
 Are you awake?
 Are you sleeping? Are you listening to me?
 Discovery of the psychic centres in the physical body.
 Mooladhara chakra is situated between the excretory
 and urinary organs or just below the uterus at the end
 of the tailbone.
 Above it is swadhisthana, slightly above the sacral bone
 of the spinal cord, the tip of the spinal cord.
 Above that is manipura, in the spinal cord, situated just
 behind the navel.
 Above that is anahata, situated in the spinal cord in line
 with the frontal hollow in the chest, behind the heart.
 Above that is vishuddhi in the neck area from where the
 cervical structure begins.
 Above that in the lower brain is ajna chakra, the upper
 end of the spinal cord from where the upper brain
 begins.
 Above that, on the top of the head at the point where
 hindu brahmins grow a tuft of hair, is bindu.
 On the crown of the head is sahasrara chakra.
 Concentrate on and mentally touch each of the points.
 Sahasrara, bindu, ajna, vishuddhi, anahata, manipura,
 swadhisthana, mooladhara.
 Mooladhara, swadhisthana, manipura, anahata, vishuddhi,
 ajna, bindu, sahasrara (repeat and go over the above
 chakras six times).
 Concentrate on the psychic symbols of the centres. I will
 repeat the symbols and retain peculiarities pertaining
 to the centre concerned, but you will have to find it out
 for yourself.

The location of various centres in the spinal cord.

There are eight psychic centres located in the spinal cord and each centre represents a particular level of consciousness.

The centres or chakras are as follows:

1. *Mooladhara*: It has the following form. A pink serpent inside a red inverted triangle. Its tail is facing the base of the triangle, just protruding outside the triangle. Its head is turned towards the apex of the triangle, but a little away from the sides.
2. *Swadhisthana*: The chief peculiarity of this centre is that, once this centre is awakened, one becomes totally unconscious of external surroundings.
3. *Manipura*: It is a bright yellow lotus with ten petals as its symbol.
4. *Anahata*: When this chakra is awakened the sadhaka gets a vision of a solitary flame illuminated against a pitch dark background.
5. *Vishuddhi*: One gets the sensation of cold nectar drops which are always pouring on this chakra from the higher regions. One gets the sweet taste of nectar drops.
6. *Ajna*: One feels drowsy and enters into a mood of sweet intoxication.
7. *Bindu*: Its symbol is a crescent moon and the atmosphere is illuminated by silvery moonlight.
8. *Sahasrara*: It has a red lotus with infinite petals, with an oval-shaped shivalingam adorning the centre.

Now follows a very long procession of psychic symbols and various objects. Try to visualize them and bring them before your consciousness:

Shivalingam, standing Christ, a flickering lamp, a big mango tree, a car moving on the road, a burning fire, coloured clouds, yellow clouds, white clouds, blue clouds, clouds coming from the west, clouds moving fast with the wind, a starry night, a moonlit night, a full moon, a dog standing, a cat sleeping, a horse racing, an antelope

racing, an elephant moving, the sun rising, the sun setting, waves of the ocean, church bells ringing, over a church a cross, in the church a priest kneeling, a devotee praying, an aeroplane in flight, a sandy beach by the sea, people relaxing on the hot sand, a red triangle, a golden spider web, see yourself lying down without clothes, see your transparent body outside your physical body, see the third smoky body, see the fourth luminous body, go into your brain, a small golden egg, a golden egg small in size, luminous in character, see a golden bird, the bank of a river, boat in sail, sailors rowing a boat, crystal water, waves rippling on it, on a big lake a blue lotus, on a big lake a red lotus, on a big lake a yellow lotus, an old house, chimney smoke rising, in the cold winter a fire is burning in the house, a crocodile, a big tiger, an elephant, a cobra, blue lotus on a lake, the golden cord from the navel, the golden cord attached to the navel, at the other end of the golden cord your transparent body, try to see your transparent body from this physical body and try to see this physical body from the transparent body.

See it again and again, see it again and again.

The spinal cord, a creeping sensation in the spinal cord, moving upwards, watch your body as I watch your body from outside, see it from top to toe (repeat three times), see the different parts of your body, head, trunk, neck, right arm, left arm, right leg, left leg, the whole body, as if you were seeing it from outside, see your whole body as if you were seeing it from outside, then from the physical body look up to the end of the golden cord and see the transparent body, without any distinction of eyes, nose or ears, just simple outlines, with simple outlines, transparent. Beyond, the sky can be seen. Try to see the transparent body, try to see the transparent body from the physical body, as if you are seeing your physical body by being outside of it (repeat transparent body to physical body, physical from transparent, your head,

your chest, abdomen, hands, legs, everything, the whole body. Repeat physical body to transparent body, etc).

Back to the blue sky.

See yourself in yogamudra, shashankasana, supta vajrasana, bhujangasana, shalabhasana, dhanurasana, paschimottanasana, sarvangasana, halasana, matsyasana, sirshasana, lotus pose. Practise meditation in chidakasha.

See yourself in meditation, a sannyasin in a geru coloured gown, a Buddha in lotus pose, standing Christ, kneeling Mary, an illuminated cross, go into your physical body, find out the life force, become aware of the life force, become aware of prana, prana the life force, experience it as all around movement. See your own aura around your face. Is it yellow, green, violet, white, deep yellow, burning yellow, golden yellow, pink, purple, brown, black? Find out your own aura. Look at yourself from different angles. A golden spider's web, three nadis in the spinal cord, one red, one white, one blue; find out which is where, which is red, which is blue, find out which is where.

Go to bindu and try to discover a sound there, there is a sound, an infinite ocean, calm and quiet, a dark green jungle with cobras, lions and goats living there in love and peace.

A cottage, in front of which a rishi is sitting in samadhi, experience *Om*, experience the chanting of *Om* everywhere.

Concentrate on the form of *Om* (repeat three times) and hear the chanting of *Om*, become aware of the sacrificial fire, the smoke rising from the fire, the smell of incense, the fragrance of flowers, become aware of yourself, find out and question yourself, "Am I aware of myself?

Am I asleep? Am I listening to Swamiji?"

Now look at your body, now look at your body, in parts and as a whole (go through all the parts of the body again), try to see your body as clearly as I see it by being outside of it.

Now look to your senses, five *karmendriyas* and five *jnanendriyas*; the *karmendriyas*, or senses of action, are: right hand, left hand, right foot, left foot, tongue that speaks, reproductive organ, excretory organs. The *jnanendriyas*, or senses of knowledge, are: right eye, left eye, right ear, left ear, nose, tongue which tastes, skin over the whole of the body.

Now become aware of your mind, the mind by which you know. Become aware of the faculty of awareness, become aware of yourself. Develop the awareness that you are practising yoga nidra. Look within yourself and become aware of the existence of prana in your body in the form of heat and all around movement. Again, look within and become aware of the existence of your consciousness by which you know that you are practising yoga nidra. Look within your body and become aware of the golden egg in the centre of your brain, a golden egg, very small – that is the seat of the highest consciousness in man; a golden egg, very small in size – that is the seat of Supreme Consciousness, the highest consciousness, the centre of your consciousness; a golden egg, not big, very small – that is the seat of Supreme Consciousness in man. Try to become your own witness and now say, “I am not this body, I am not these senses, I am not this mind, I am not this awareness, this finite awareness; I am not this body, I am not this heaviness, I am not this pain, I am not this cold, I am not this mind, I am not this karma.

This body, the senses, the mind, the awareness, the prana, feeling, experience, and everything that is physical, mental, psychic, conscious, I am not. Immortal self I am.”

Again and again go into your brain.

Find that golden egg in you.

Try to see yourself encased in that golden egg.

Again and again try to go within your brain and look within.

Into the golden egg and try to identify yourself with that golden egg. Try to find out that golden egg within you. And try to see yourself as that.

And say to yourself again:

“Beyond the mind, the body, the senses, the karma, nature and everything that is physical, mental, psychic, unconscious, I am in the form of the golden egg.”

Become aware of your physical body.

Try and see your physical body as if you are seeing it from outside.

Go into your brain, within, in the centre of your brain.

Try to concentrate on and try to become aware of a golden egg, bright golden egg and Cosmic Consciousness in you and try to be aware of it, try to locate the golden egg in the centre of yourself, again try to become aware of it. Say to your mind, “I am that.”



24

Antar Mouna

When one sits for meditation, millions of thoughts come as disturbances to the surface of the mind. We may try and suppress our thoughts, and ultimately get so frustrated that we give up meditation. These thoughts are only the very first hindrances to good meditation. However, we can convert these thoughts from barriers to stepping stones.

Our thinking process is stimulated by desires, as such there will naturally be tension in our mind. The mind finds an outlet for all these petty desires as soon as you outwardly calm yourself, close your eyes and try to proceed in the practice of meditation. The mind opens all the hidden gates and windows, and these desires come silently, expressing themselves in deep and involved thoughts. These thoughts were first inside your mind only in essence, but they now take complicated shapes and forms which can astonish and even disgust us. The aspirant gets so involved in all his worries and desires that he even forgets he is practising meditation. Afterwards, when he recollects himself, he feels defeated and frustrated, and decides it would be better to stay away from yoga and keep to his daily business.

This process of the unfolding of thoughts acts as a psychological purging. When we just sit down calm and quiet, no disturbing thoughts will come to our mind, but as soon as we resolve to sit for meditation, the purging starts, and thoughts keep coming to our mind with fantastic speed

and confusion. The solution to this difficulty is just a matter of patience and understanding. When you embark on something new you always have to start from the beginning and so, at first, you must practise regular meditation with patience. When one suffers from constipation he takes purgatives to relieve his constipation. The purging is a process towards health and is very necessary if he is to get better. Similarly, psychological purging is a process towards meditation and we must go through it if we are to be successful in meditation.

Therefore the thoughts that come during meditation should not be suppressed. They should be allowed to express themselves in a healthy and controlled way, just as a charioteer lets his horses run as fast as they can, but always keeps the reins tightly in his hands.

What happens when a thought is suppressed in meditation? For a few moments the thought will disappear, but then it will reappear with double force and power, and will occupy your mind with such cleverness that you will not even be aware of it at first. It is a temptation in meditation to suppress all thoughts of a bad or criminal nature, but this purging must be an expression of all our thoughts, regardless of their nature. Only when this valuable part of meditation has been completed, can the nature and spontaneous unfoldment of deeper layers of consciousness take place. This process of purging, where the sadhaka only has to be aware of his flow of thoughts, is called in yoga *antar mouna* or inner silence.

In this practice we treat our mind and thoughts like children in a kindergarten. The aspirant sits down, closes his eyes and keeps his mind wide open; he does not think but allows the thoughts to play around freely and spontaneously, and he lets his mind be distracted by outer noises. However, he has to fulfil the role of a guardian; he has to be carefully aware of everything going on inside and outside. Above all, he must remember he should not let his mind get involved with anything. He can allow his ears to listen to the different

distractions, but his mind should remain uninvolved with them. The connection between brain and noise should be completely cut off. He listens to the sound, but he should forget about the object that has created the sound. He treats his thoughts in the same way. He should watch his thoughts very carefully and alertly, but he should not think about them or become involved in them. After some time the aspirant will enter into a semi-hypnotic state, a state where he will be able to listen to all the sounds and noises around him with such indifference that the objects that produce the sounds do not influence his brain. This is the first part of antar mouna practice, i.e. where one transcends the awareness of sound and external sensory perception.

When the concentration has become more intense, the outflow and awareness of the inner thoughts will also become more intense. These thoughts should never be suppressed. The aspirant has to become a seer, a witness of what is going on inside his mind. He has to stand apart, but at the same time he must be aware of every single thought. Concentration and awareness of concentration will become deeper and deeper.

The practice is very important in yoga. It is especially designed for people who suffer from anxiety or neurosis and those who are unable to concentrate their minds, but in fact anyone will be benefited by antar mouna. People who have suppressed thoughts find they can take on forms and images which at times can be very frightening, but if they practise inner silence and allow their thoughts free flow, remaining a constant witness to them, they can eliminate the root cause of their complex.

Our thoughts seem to exist in chains which do not necessarily corrugate or interrelate with one another. The thoughts are chained together, but the chain is not one; there are many chains, and every chain is cut off from the next by a space, blankness and vacuum. They are constantly interrupted like a film with frequent intervals. This film is suddenly cut for an interval of time, a period of no thinking. One must be aware

of this interval between thoughts. As you are aware of the thoughts, so you must be aware of the 'no thinking' intervals. Throughout the practice, awareness of 'I am the witness', 'I am the seer' must be continuous. As the connection from ears and brain was cut in the preliminary stage, the mind must similarly be cut from the brain and heart, and remain a witness. There must be no emotional involvement, no identification with the thoughts. These thoughts, once they are expressed, are eliminated naturally and freely, so that eventually the mind becomes fit for meditation. So, when we practise this inner silence we close our eyes, relax ourselves in meditation, do not control any thought and do not dislike or hate any thought. We are not even particular about concentration or about the process of transcending empirical and objective consciousness. In the later stage we develop awareness of looking at the inner space of our consciousness, in yogic terminology, the *chidakash*. Just as we watch films at the cinema and on television, or sports games, in the same way we should witness our thoughts and visions being expressed by the mind.

Inner silence gives sound mental health because in this practice the impurities, complexes and hidden fears are eliminated from the mind. These hidden ideas in the mind, that we do not like, are the causes of our tensions from which we constantly suffer and try to escape. When we relax the mind in antar mouna these bands of tension are unfettered, but first the disliked ideas come out. Once these bands of tension are eliminated, tension will not recur.

We are constantly trying to relieve our tension through some form of entertainment, diversion, or through sleep, but these provide only temporary relief; the only real cure is inner silence or meditation. Emotional complexes, repressions or tensions are the greatest disturbing factors of meditation. These emotional tensions are invisible and impossible to detect. Some people find meditation easy, whereas others will be unable to meditate. Why? If you analyze deeply you will find it was an emotional tension which was obstructing. When muscular and mental tensions

are relaxed, the emotional tensions will manifest themselves, but when there exist muscular and mental tensions emotional tension remains underground, suppressed. Only when there is relaxation all throughout the body and mind, and when you have gone deep into meditation will the emotional tensions come up. We must prepare ourselves by improving our mental health by antar mouna.

Antar mouna is a part of the system of *pratyahara* or negation of the empirical consciousness. We try to go above sensory attachment so that the consciousness becomes free from pain. With this inner freedom, you can turn to concentration on the higher spiritual forces.

I have helped many people suffering from mental illnesses through yoga. For instance, a boy of eighteen who behaved like a four year-old boy was brought to me and I kept him with me for some time. I taught him a few yoga exercises, then some pranayama and, through pranayama, I developed in him a state of relaxation. When he was completely relaxed he used to cry, and he would shake his whole body. Gradually I taught him systems of meditation. During meditation he used to express himself and the process of purging started. His psychological personality was dormant, inert, and completely clogged up. How had it happened? In the case of this boy it had happened because he could not develop his psychological awareness, but meditation brought about a great change in the processes of his brain matter, in his nervous system and in his psychological awareness. After six months when he left me, he was acting as a boy of twelve years, so now he was only six years behind. He could understand things better and his behaviour was developing naturally.

From this instance you can understand that meditation is not only a method of union with the higher intelligence, of cosmic, of absolute awareness, but it can also be a panacea for mental illnesses. Those of you who have studied Freud's system of psychoanalysis and also the yogic science where psychological symbols and images are brought to light in

the depth of meditation, can understand how more sensitive, handy and easy this method of meditation is. In the current system of psychoanalysis, you become so hyper self-conscious that, instead of getting rid of the present mental illness, you often develop another. In yoga this does not happen. Yoga changes the pattern of your thinking, and the way of reasoning about things that affect your life. It purges your karmas or powerful subconscious impressions which condition your thoughts and experiences, which have been with us for a very long time and compel us to act in certain ways. They lie at the very source of our behaviour. Even if you do not want to take to yoga for spiritual reasons, at least you should accept that yoga has potential as a panacea for our mental ills.

Inner silence should be practised as a preliminary to meditation or in its own right. Those who are suffering from neurosis or from insomnia, and have a lot of anxieties and worries, should deal with these before embarking on meditation. Inner silence should be practised in the early morning and at night. In the early morning, you can practise inner silence concerning your future plans and at night, practise it on spontaneous thought processes. Within a few weeks you will find yourself much better. You will become your own doctor and psychiatrist. You can become your own master and master of your mind. You will be able to control your whole system of thinking and thereby improve and modify your personality.

In antar mouna you close your eyes and relax yourself in any comfortable position. You keep your eyes closed until the practice is over. It is not meditation, only a yogic relaxation technique, inducing psychic and mental relaxation. Relaxation is a suspension of activity. It does not matter if your mind is vacillating, dissipated or distracted. You keep yourself free from all conscious effort and you do not try to do anything, you just sit or lie quietly with eyes closed, and remain relaxed. Whether the spinal cord is straight or bent, or in which position you sit does not matter.

Then you start listening for external sounds and you become aware of sensory perceptions, such as touch or smell. With your consciousness you search for auditory perception. If you hear a sound you let your mind go to it. You do not control your mind, or worry about thinking, or worry about disturbances. You are completely free so there are no disturbances at all. You are a witness of all perceptions. You neither hate them nor try to stop them, nor are you afraid of them. You let your mind go outside on to the main road amongst all the traffic. You repeat to yourself mentally, “My mind is a witness of all sounds going on around me and outside.” You do not bring your mind back from these attractions, but you remain a witness, you keep your mind free. Whenever you hear a sound spontaneously, it means your consciousness is attracted to it. Well, you let it be attracted and you follow it. In antar mouna there is no concentration, no meditation, you just let your consciousness move independently and freely. You do not chain it, but follow every form of perception that attracts your mind and you go with it as far as you can. You keep on searching for sense perceptions – you can find one anywhere, in any corner of the room or outside the room. Only you must remember that you are keeping your consciousness free to follow only sense perceptions – sound, touch, taste or smell.

You mentally classify these perceptions. You say to yourself, “I am hearing a car, now a bird, now people talking, the door opening, I am smelling smoke.” In this way you become aware of all the sense perceptions and also their order of perception. After some time, the mind will become free from sense perceptions and experiences. It will become quiet and undistracted by external goings on. Also your faculty of awareness becomes keener and able to experience perceptions more precisely. Now the mind is free to be aware of internal thoughts and now you pass on to the second practice of thought awareness. Antar mouna takes the mind to the state of pratyahara and spontaneous concentration and meditation.

25

Antar Mouna

Practice

Kindly adjust yourself properly. Stop all physical movements.

Close your eyes.

No physical movement; an absolutely motionless state of the body.

Become aware of the outside environment. Become aware of the external environment. Become aware of the external environment.

Expose your consciousness to outside happenings.

Do not control the mind. Do not withdraw your senses.

Do not withdraw your mind from outside attractions of the senses.

Keep yourself open and be receptive to everything that is taking place inside and outside this room.

Develop homogeneous awareness of the external, homogeneous awareness of the external.

Receive every sound. Receive every sound.

Keep the mind open. Keep the senses open to all external sensations.

Let the power of sense perception go as far as it can.

Expose your consciousness to all external experiences, external perceptions.

Develop homogeneous awareness of everything that

is taking place in this room and outside, including my instructions.

Become a radar of cosmic perception. Receive every little bit from outside.

Do not remain inside. Do not remain inside. Do not close your consciousness.

Let your consciousness stretch itself at once in the direction from where the perception is taking place. Let your consciousness flow out in all directions homogeneously.

Pick up every sound, every perception and every sensation.

Keep yourself open. Keep your consciousness exposed completely.

Let your consciousness flow out to all sides.

Do not withdraw the mind. Do not withdraw the senses. Do not react to external disturbances. Do not withdraw yourself from external perception, but let your consciousness flow outside, to all directions, where the perception is taking place, where the sound is taking place.

Keep your mind open. No thinking. Only awareness of the external. It is not concentration or meditation. It is the development of external awareness to the maximum. It is the development of external awareness to the maximum. It is the development of awareness of outward surroundings to the maximum. Go as far as your consciousness can go. Pick up the subtlest sound in the atmosphere and become aware of all that is taking place in this room and outside in a homogeneous manner.

If two sounds are taking place outside your consciousness you should be able to receive both of them at the same time. You should be able to receive all the sounds consciously.

Conscious awareness of the external. Conscious awareness of the external. Homogeneous awareness of the external.

Just as from the burning lamp light radiates out, in the same manner let the flow of your consciousness issue forth from yourself, from every part of your personality.

That is called homogeneous awareness. No conditioned awareness. No simple awareness. No concentrated awareness. No one-pointed awareness. But homogeneous awareness. Develop homogeneous awareness. No partial awareness.

If you hear outside the sound of a banging door, do not concentrate on that, because if you concentrate on that sound, you will miss receiving consciously the sound of the car that is passing.

Just listen, just receive. Do not concentrate.

Please understand it. Make your consciousness homogeneous. Make your consciousness homogeneous, to illumine every perception that is taking place within a particular range, the range your consciousness can reach.

Make your consciousness illumine the perception as far as it can, all perceptions, excluding none.

Develop that faculty. Develop that capacity.

Simultaneous awareness of the external.

Simultaneous awareness of the external. Homogeneous awareness of perception as far as your consciousness is capable of penetrating.

Now concentrate on chidakash, the inner space within the mind. Concentrate on chidakash. No movement. Please concentrate on chidakash. Concentrate on chidakash and develop conscious knowledge of your thoughts.

Do not control any thought. Do not control any thought. Do not control any thought. Do not think any thought, but develop conscious awareness of all spontaneous thoughts. Develop conscious awareness of all spontaneous thoughts which will arise in your chidakash.

Become a seer of your spontaneous thoughts. Become a seer of your spontaneous thoughts. Do not think. Do not control your thoughts.

Concentrate on chidakash and look within for thoughts. Do not control any thought. Do not miss seeing any thought. Do not miss seeing any thought. Do not miss seeing any thought. Do not think any thought.

See spontaneous thoughts (one minute pause). Relax your mind and see your thoughts. Relax your mind and see your thoughts.

Concentrate on chidakash. What am I thinking? What am I thinking? What am I thinking?

Now pose the question this way: What am I thinking, what did I think? (pause one minute) What am I thinking, what did I think? What do I want to think? (pause) What am I thinking? (pause) What was I thinking? (pause) What do I wish to think? (pause)

Relax your mind and see your thoughts spontaneously (pause one minute). Develop conscious awareness of spontaneous thoughts.

If the mind becomes absent in between, it does not matter.

Ask again after some time: What did I think? and recapitulate what you were thinking.

Sometimes your mind will be so engrossed in thinking that you do not know what you were thinking at the time of thinking, but as soon as you come back to your senses, ask the question: What was I thinking?

Concentrate on chidakash. Concentrate on chidakash. Concentration on chidakash.

Develop one thought of your own choice. Develop one theme of thought of your own choice. Go ahead with that thinking for some time until I stop you.

Do not entertain spontaneous thoughts. Do not entertain spontaneous thoughts, but only those thoughts which you choose of your own will.

Pose a thought and develop that thought as a theme and wait for my warning.

Concentrate on chidakash. No thinking. Stop the thoughts. No thinking, no thinking, no thinking. No thinking, only awareness of chidakash. No thinking, no thinking, only awareness of chidakash. Again pose another item of thought, a thought of your will, not a spontaneous one. Go on with that and wait for my warning (pause one minute).

Stop thinking, concentrate on chidakash and no thinking. No thinking, no thinking, no thinking.

Concentration on chidakash. Develop another thought of your choice, and continue with the thought with absolute concentration and absorption, and wait for my warning (pause half minute).

Stop thinking.

Concentration on chidakash and no thinking, no thinking, no thinking. Concentration on chidakash and no thinking, no thinking, no thinking. Concentration on chidakash.

Pose another thought and dwell on that thought. Wait for my warning (pause one minute).

Stop thinking. Concentration on chidakash and no thinking. No thinking, no thinking. Concentration on chidakash and no thinking, no thinking, no thinking.

Concentration on the physical body. Concentration on the whole physical body. Complete awareness of the whole physical body until the whole of the physical body becomes steady, motionless, like a log of wood. Constant, unceasing and unbroken awareness of the body as a whole. Not even the slightest movement.

Awareness of stillness. Awareness of stillness. Awareness of stiffness. Superimpose this awareness of stiffness on your body. The body should become like a log of wood, immobile.

Unbroken and constant awareness. Unbroken constant awareness of the whole body, the whole body. Develop

constant unceasing and unbroken awareness of your whole body, of its steadiness and motionlessness, and not even the slightest flickering in any part of the body. Homogeneous awareness of the whole body.

Concentration on the breath in the nostrils. Concentration on the breath in the nostrils. Concentration on the breath in the nostrils. The breath goes up to the upper point of the nose and it comes down a little bit outside the nostrils. Concentrate on that imperceptible flowing of breath, which flows inside the nostrils and also a little outside. Concentration on that imperceptible flowing of breath which flows inside the nostrils and also a little outside. Concentrate on the breath in the nostrils and also outside, which is very subtle and which is also abstract.

Add the suggestion 'no thinking'. Synchronize the breath with the suggestion of 'no thinking'. Synchronize the breath with the suggestion of 'no thinking'.

From the upper point of the nose to the tip of the nose and a little bit outside, concentration on the flow of breath, with the suggestion of 'no thinking', constant, unbroken awareness.

The most close and intimate awareness of breath. Combine your consciousness with your breath. Unite your breath and concentration together. Unite your breath and concentration together and let both of them flow in the nostrils.

Suggestion of 'no thinking'.

Unite your awareness with the breath. Unite your awareness with the breath. Let them become one.

Bring your consciousness closer still to your breath. Bring your consciousness closer to your breath. Let them become one.

Bring your consciousness to your breath as close as possible. Make them one and let them flow in the nostrils and a little outside with awareness, with the suggestion of 'no thinking' (pause half minute).

Intense awareness of the breath in the nostrils and the suggestion of 'no thinking'. Constant, unbroken, unceasing awareness of the breath in the nostrils with the suggestion of 'no thinking' (pause one minute).

Concentration on chidakash also, side by side with the breath in the nostrils, and the suggestion of 'no thinking'.

Withdraw your mind from inside and bring it outside, make it extroverted. Make it external, make it receptive to the outside. Open yourself to the external (pause).

Completely extrovert. Open yourself to the outside. Let your consciousness flow outside and become extrovert. Develop homogeneous awareness of the outside. Develop homogeneous awareness of the outside, the external world. Develop homogeneous awareness of the external world.

Do not control the mind. Do not withdraw the senses. Keep yourself exposed to everything that is external.

Concentration on breath and the suggestion of 'no thinking', and concentration on chidakash. Concentration on the breath in the nostrils with the suggestion of 'no thinking' and concentration on chidakash.

Constant awareness of breath.

Constant awareness of the breath that flows in the nostrils, a little bit outside, with the suggestion of 'no thinking' and chidakash.

Constant and unbroken awareness of the breath in the nostrils with the suggestion of 'no thinking'.

Constant suggestion of 'no thinking' and chidakash (pause one minute).

Let your mind go outside to the external and become aware of the outside world at once, be quick.

I do not have to repeat all the instructions now, please do it at once.

Become aware of the external.

Go in.

I do not have to repeat the breath in the nostrils and chidakash; understand it yourself. When I say, “go in”, it means the breath, the suggestion of ‘no thinking’ and chidakash.

When I say, “Go out”, it means become aware of the external, of the external world.

Go in, be quick (pause half minute).

Come out (pause half minute).

Go in (pause half minute).

Come out (pause half minute).

Go in (pause half minute).

Come out, be quick, very quick.

Come out means awareness of the external world.

Go in means awareness of the internal world.

Go in means the breath in the nostrils.

Go in (pause half minute).

Go out (pause half minute).

Go in (pause half minute).

Go out (pause half minute).

In (pause quarter minute), out (pause quarter minute).

In (pause quarter minute), out (pause quarter minute).

Still more out, more out, still more out.

In, still more in, more in.

Out, more out, still more out.

In, more in, in, in.

Out (pause half minute).

Concentration on your awareness, concentration on your awareness, through which you are aware of everything that you did and that you are doing.

Concentration on ‘I am’.

It means the same: concentration on your awareness, concentration on ‘I am’, concentration on ‘I’ awareness (pause one minute).

Relax your body.

Relax your body.

Open your eyes.

26

A Lesson in Antar Trataka

Practice

Please get yourself ready for antar trataka.

Select an asana for yourself in which you can sit comfortably for 25 or 30 minutes at least, without any movement.

Close your eyes.

Check your position, the position of your body, spinal cord, hands and so on.

Now chant *Om* seven times.

Pronunciation of *Om* will be different.

Not the way you did in kriya yoga.

Bring your consciousness to the centre of the two eyebrows, which is known as bhrumadhya.

The centre of the two eyebrows.

Try to bring your consciousness there as slowly and as gradually as you can, no tense efforts, quietly.

Focus your attention in the centre of the two eyebrows and, if you find it difficult, take a little saliva with your fourth finger and place your fourth finger with saliva at that point.

This is the centre of the two eyebrows.

Keep the finger there for a few seconds and then take it away.

Remain quiet.

Keep your awareness in the centre of the eyebrows.

Imagine and, if possible, visualize a tiny star.
A tiny star in the centre of the two eyebrows.
If you can visualize, well and good, but if you cannot,
then you can imagine the star.
It may appear for a moment and then disappear.
That does not matter.
Keep the consciousness of a star alive between the two
eyebrows.
If you are able to visualize the star, watch.
Make it steady.
If you are not able to visualize, but if you are able to
imagine, imagine a solitary star in the sky, enveloped
by clouds.
One single tiny star in an infinite sky can twinkle within
a moment.
Even if you are not successful, try again.
With the fourth finger, take a little saliva from the tip
of the tongue and place it in the centre of the two
eyebrows.
Hold it there for a few seconds and then take it off.
Maintain exclusive awareness of bhrumadhya, the
eyebrow centre.
Imagine and, if possible, visualize a tiny star.
If you are able to visualize it, try to maintain it but if
you cannot, please imagine a solitary star in the sky
enveloped by black clouds.
Always maintain the awareness of the star.
Then, those who have practised trataka know the inner
psychic point.
Imagine, or if possible, visualize the psychic point,
the psychic seed different in colour from individual to
individual.
Remember, when practising trataka you closed your eyes.
You looked within.
What did you see?
A small seed-like object, moving upwards.
Sometimes rosy.

Sometimes pink.
 Sometimes green.
 With a varying outline.
 Imagine it and if possible, visualize it.
 If you are able to visualize it, go on pursuing it, but if you are not able to visualize, imagine a bright coloured seed, a psychic point which you see in the second stage of trataka, becoming more and more clear in bhrumadhya, in the eyebrow centre.
 Awaken and maintain the awareness of the psychic point.
 The luminous dot.
 The bright seed.
 Try your best to discover the colour if you have seen that luminous dot.
 If you are unable to see the luminous dot, then try to make a mental dot, a mental picture of that which you have already seen in trataka.
 Make a mental picture of a luminous dot.
 Gradually.
 Carve a mental point.
 It is possible for those who have practised trataka on a candle, they should now visualize or imagine the flame of the candle, the golden flame of the candle.
 Try to be aware of the flame.
 Visualize it if you can.
 How is it at the top?
 Pointed? Does it play fickle with your eyes?
 How is it at the bottom?
 Black, green? Try to find out.
 Again.
 If it is not possible for you to visualize, start seeing yourself sitting in front of the table.
 See the height of the table, breadth, colour and everything about the table.
 Make a mental picture as quickly as possible.
 Over that you see the candlestand and the perpendicular candlestick.

Over that you can see the candle waste.
Over that waste you find the candle, white in colour, half finished.
The wax, melted wax trickling down from the top of it.
The wick of the candle, black in colour, burning the top of it.
The wick ignited and surrounded by the flame, surrounded by the flame.
See it. Is it mercury in colour? Brown? Bronze? Gold? Big? Small? Visualize it, as absolutely as you can.
Become aware of the flame burning.
You can feel the ignited point of the wick.
It is not straight, a bit bent towards the right.
The wick is burning and that is the flame.
And it is according to the position of the wick, a bit bent to the left, that the flame will have its shape.
It is bent to the right, then you can see the flame, a bit broader at the base and a bit taller above.
At the bottom of the flame, in the centre, you can find from where the flame emerges, a black, smoky colour.
That is the womb of light.
Visualize the whole thing – the table, the stand, the candle, trickling of the melted wax and the flame vacillating.
The flame is wavering a little and you are looking at it.
Again go to the centre of the eyebrows.
Visualize or try to visualize the star.
Visualization of a star is really antar trataka.
By gradual practice this inner star will become constant.
And its development means development of psychic vision.
To see a star within the eyebrow centre, which is psychic in nature, means that you have developed psychic vision.
Please understand this.
Without any tense effort, as quickly as you can, focus your total attention at the point between the two eyebrows, either by pressing it or by applying anything

on it – a little paste preparation on it mixed with a red colour.

Put a small dot in between the eyebrows.

Within a few seconds you will find that the dot is becoming clearer and clearer.

The pressure point is being felt more and more accurately.

Those who can feel the pressure point voluntarily, they can do so without any preparation.

A star, a small star.

A small star, the luminous star which you had experienced in trataka.

That you should practise, that you should visualize.

That luminous dot.

See it in bhrumadhya, the eyebrow centre.

Then the flame of the candle.

Visualize the flame of the candle.

Become aware of the desk, the candle stand, the stiff wick and the flame.

Its colour around you.

You see the aura of the flame.

You see the flame and the aura of the flame.

Now put a bit more effort and bring your consciousness again to the centre of the eyebrows.

Keep your consciousness steady.

Your awareness continual and unfluctuating.

Remain aware of the centre of the eyebrows.

Eyebrow centre.

Collect awareness from all different quarters to the centre of the two eyebrows.

Withdraw your awareness to this point, from all other points of the body.

Absolute awareness of bhrumadhya.

This is antar trataka, in which you try to gaze at the point which is internal.

And that point is ultimately a star.

And one more thing.

In bhrumadhya, the centre of the eyebrows, you see a beautiful human eye.

An open human eye, a beautiful human eye.

Open human eye.

Eyelids, hairs are there.

Everything can be seen.

A perfect human eye.

You can see it with absolute ease.

And it comes very quickly.

Human eye.

Keep on with this.

Collect all tendencies and focus yourself in the form of a human eye.

Then again between the two eyebrows you have your own third eye.

It is in your own body – within, behind the skin. Behind the bony structure, it is within flesh.

Deep.

Oh yes. You can see it deep.

It is within you.

Behind the skin and behind the bone, in the depth of the eyebrow centre.

It is a small eye which is closed.

The muscular elevated lids of the eye are tight even as the lips of the mouth are closed.

The elevated muscles remain tight with each other.

And you can see that it is an eye within by its formation and this is the third eye which can be developed by the practice I am telling you.

The third eye is the instrument of the psychic vision.

And then again you can see shivalingam.

Those who know it can do it.

Those who do not know, they must imagine. It is on the round platform projecting sideways.

In the centre of it, an oval-shaped stone – it is quite easy.

An oval-shaped stone projecting upwards.

You can imagine any temple in India or any place where
you have seen such a symbol. If you have, do it.
See it and then visualize it in this way.
Sit down. See your altar in front of you.
And the crystal stone.
And you are looking within it.



27

Lessons in Meditation

During meditation, all worries, anxieties, responsibilities and obligations are set aside. Meditation gives rest, relaxation and peace to the mind just as the body is given food and rest to renew its energies. Many people find it difficult to meditate, to relax the mind and stop the tensions. The human mind can be compared to a motor car. What sort of driver is he who hasn't learnt how to apply the brakes properly and stop the motor car! But we are like this driver in that we have learnt to drive the body and mind, but we do not know how to suspend its activities voluntarily. So, instead of being master of the body and mind, we are their slaves.

I shall give you five techniques which bring about the required relaxation, peace and tranquillity needed to start meditation.

Practice

Preparation

Sit cross-legged with the back and neck erect. With an upright and straight spinal cord, breathing becomes freer and tensions are spontaneously released. Place the hands on the knees or in the lap. Now close your eyes, but do not start meditation for some time. For ten minutes or so, do not make any physical movement and remain aware of the quietness and stillness of the body. After this, give positive suggestions to the mind that

you are sitting for meditation and it must co-operate with you. Say to yourself, "I am about to meditate and throughout I want my mind to remain quiet. No thought will come and disturb me, I will experience peace and relaxation." If you give yourself such a suggestion, meditation becomes a natural activity. The mind will spontaneously withdraw from outside distractions and give the required relaxation and peace.

Om chanting

Chant *Om* with complete concentration on the sound *Om*. Forget everything else; only be conscious of the sound *Om . . .Om . . .Om . . .Om . . .Om*. Produce the sound *Om* (*Aum*) with absolute concentration. Be aware of the sound vibration *Om . . .Om . . .Om*. 'Au' is the total expansion of sound and 'm' is contracted sound. *Om* is expanded sound which becomes one-pointed. So with expanded consciousness, start 'Au' and with 'm' as the sound ceases, draw the consciousness to one point. Or you can become aware of the sound vibration throughout the body; as you produce the sound *Om* imagine the sound consciousness descending and permeating the whole body.

Breath awareness

After chanting *Om* for five to ten minutes transfer your awareness, your consciousness, to your natural breath. Do not breath unnaturally, do not lengthen the breath. Let the breath be natural. Now concentrate the mind on the breath and become aware of its passage between the navel and the throat. Be aware you are breathing in and breathing out and also that you are breathing up and breathing down. When you breathe in, imagine your breath ascending upwards from navel to throat. When you exhale, imagine your breath descending downwards from the throat to navel. Be continuously aware, have constant awareness of each breath. Say mentally "I am breathing in; I am breathing out." Now count your breaths. One inhalation and one exhalation constitutes one round, one breath. So you are aware of

three processes simultaneously: that you are breathing in and breathing out, that your breath is ascending from the navel to the throat, and descending from the throat to the navel.

Mantra awareness

Not one breath should be taken without your awareness. With deeper and greater relaxation and with absolute awareness, continue this practice of breath awareness, but now add the mantra *Soham* to it. The sound *So* is produced with the incoming breath, the ascending breath, and *Ham* with the exhalation and the descending breath. The breath, the passage, the method is the same as in breath awareness, only you add the mantra.

Next, transfer the consciousness, the awareness of the breath, the awareness that you are counting and of the mantra *Soham* to the psychic passage of the spinal cord. The consciousness ascends as it did in the frontal passage with the inhalation and descends with the exhalation, along the hollow tube of the spinal cord.

This practice requires deep concentration and greater imagination. Have absolute awareness of the passage of breath. The consciousness is synchronized with the rhythm of the breath – the ascending and descending order of the breath. A complete consolidation of your awareness is brought about: the mantra is synchronized with the breath, the breath is synchronized with the spinal cord and the mind is synchronized with the movement of the breath.

Concentration on the psychic centre

Finally, when you have done the practice for some time, intensifying your awareness and concentration, you should begin concentration on a psychic centre. The body has many psychic centres, but the most effective one is found between the eyebrows. It is connected with the pineal gland and is sometimes referred to as the third eye or the seat of intuition. It is also linked with the psychic centre *ajna chakra* at the top of the spinal cord.

One should also choose a form or symbol to concentrate upon. It can be *Om*, a cross, flower, a picture of someone, a guru or any object which appeals to you and can awaken your pure emotions within. Without an image, the expansion of consciousness will never take place and the consciousness enters into darkness without an aid. Total concentration of the mind is placed on this room. Try to visualize it as clearly as possible. It is this total concentration, this visualization and uninterrupted awareness of an image, psychic centre or idea that constitutes real meditation.

End your practice with the chanting of *Om* and gradually become aware of your external surroundings. By the daily practice of these techniques of meditation, the mind will assume a state of peace, tranquillity and serenity, the mental capacities will be developed and a general state of relaxation and contentment will permeate your whole body.



28

Advanced Ajapa Japa

Practice

Sit cross-legged in the lotus pose or in siddhasana.

Eyes closed, relax your mind, also check your hands are in a comfortable position.

The spinal cord is erect, eyes are closed.

With me you will kindly chant *Om* in a low pitch 9 times.

With inhalation I want you to pass your awareness up through the spinal cord and with exhalation down the spinal cord.

Become aware of your entire spinal cord, right from the bottom up to the top.

The spinal cord is the seat of sushumna, the nerve and vehicle of spiritual consciousness.

Fold your tongue and stick it to the palate.

Every now and then you can release it.

Start deep breathing.

Ascending consciousness through the spinal cord.

Descending consciousness through the spinal cord.

Withdraw all your awareness to your spinal cord only.

Complete awareness of the spinal cord.

Then breathing up and down.

Calm and quiet.

Sound as if you are mildly snoring.

Deep breathing, just as a man breathes in his sleep.

The consciousness of breath, of the psychic breathing,

should be experienced in the spinal cord, ascending and descending.

Withdraw your mind from all sides to your spinal cord and to the breathing process.

Now listen to the sound your breath makes.

What is the sound the incoming breath produces, and the sound the outgoing breath produces?

If you breathe correctly, you will have the correct sound.

Try to listen.

Try to listen and discover the sound of the breathing process.

Surely your breath produces a sound.

What you have to discover is the sound.

Awareness of the spinal cord, awareness of the breathing process and awareness of the sound, all together.

Do not forget either the spinal cord, or the breathing process or the sound of the breath.

The psychic force should ascend and descend through the spinal cord which is the vehicle of our consciousness.

The psychic awareness, the psychic consciousness should ascend and descend, and you should closely watch the sound vibrations emanating from your breath.

Now release your tongue and transfer your mind from the breathing process to the inner portion of your forehead.

The inner portion of your forehead.

Become aware of the inner portion of your forehead, as if you are trying to look at the inner wall of your forehead.

See absolute formlessness.

And in that centre try to form images of your thoughts.

What are you thinking?

What thoughts are coming to your mind?

What experiences are developing within you?

What is going on in the different layers of your personality?

You are listening to my voice.

Different thoughts are coming to you, or not coming.

Whether different thoughts come or not, it does not matter.
Try to remain an impartial witness to all that is happening
within you.

Sometimes there will be more thoughts and sometimes
there will be fewer thoughts.

And at times there will be no thoughts.

That is not your concern.

Your concern is to be aware of any kind of thoughts or
any number of thoughts that are in your mind.

When the thoughts come do not drive them away, but
watch them closely with detachment.

Whenever a thought springs up, become aware.

Do not avoid it.

Become aware of it.

“What am I thinking?” This should be your constant
question.

“What am I thinking?” and “What’s happening to me?”

That should be your constant question.

If a thought comes to development, you shouldn’t
become a thinker.

You should not become a thinker.

You should remain a seer of thoughts and not a thinker
of thoughts.

Then bring your mind in between your two eyebrows.

The centre in between the two eyebrows.

Bring your mind to the centre between the two eyebrows,
try to centre between the two eyebrows and try to form
an image there.

Maybe a small tiny star which you see in the sky at night.

Try to form an image in the centre of the two eyebrows.

Summary

Kindly remember the first stage is the chanting of *Om*.

The second stage is awareness of the breathing process
in the spinal cord, the passage of psychic consciousness.

The third stage is looking at your forehead from within
and trying to know the different layers of your thought
process.

Finally it is the meditation on a point between the two eyebrows until it becomes clear to you.
Lastly is the chanting of *Om* again.
You began with *Om* and you end with *Om*.



29

Simple Meditation Practice

This simple practice can be done any time. Whenever you feel like going in, just become aware of your natural and spontaneous breathing process, and combine it with *Soham*.

Try it for a while, just the natural breath: sometimes deep, not of the same length always, the spontaneous natural breath. Just remain aware of it and along with the breath become aware of *So* with the ingoing and *Ham* with the outgoing breath.

No deep breathing. No breathing with effort. It should be effortless, natural, spontaneous and normal. With every breath you have to affirm mentally you are aware of *Soham*. No sound is produced; it is just the natural breathing.

In between work, or at any time, just close your eyes. Become aware of your breathing process and switch on to *Soham* for 2 or 3 minutes. You will find this method becomes extremely helpful in your daily meditation and gives you deeper awareness.

30

Further Instructions on Antar Mouna

To close your eyes, look within and go in – these are the most important parts of meditation, but before we can look within and dive deep into our own consciousness, we must solve the problems that arise. The whole practice of meditation is based on two fundamental theories. One is the feeling that thoughts must be suppressed during meditation and the other is that one should give expression to all thoughts that come and watch them carefully. Let us be clear about this. When the mind is terribly upset and thoughts are constantly hammering at the mind, then you should watch your thoughts and be a witness to the thought processes, and you should not suppress them. However, if your mind is comparatively quiet and only a few thoughts are coming, but no compelling thoughts that shake your consciousness from the centre of awareness, then you should suppress or take no notice of whatever distractions you have in your mind.

If you are upset mentally, you sit for meditation and find every time you try to fix your thoughts on one point or on one subject, object or symbol, the consciousness slips or dissipates. After a while you find yourself dwelling on these disturbances, usually those you have undergone during the day. When you try and bring your mind back, it does not want to come. You should then practise witnessing of thoughts or antar mouna for some time.

Sit down quietly with your spinal cord erect – that is the first and most important condition. The spinal cord should not be tense or bent; it should remain erect. Close your eyes and find out, ask yourself, what are you thinking? Let evil or good thoughts come. Do not check, or stop or become disturbed by any thought, good or bad.

Most important to remember is that you are not the thinker, but you are the seer of thoughts. Maintain this awareness all throughout. Remain aware, remain a seer of your thoughts, but do not be the thinker of the thoughts.

What happens when a thought comes to your mind is that you become a part of the thinking process, you identify yourself with the thinking process so much that no difference exists between yourself and the thoughts in your mind, but in inner silence you split your consciousness into two parts, into the thinker and the seer of the thoughts. There must be a constant awareness of ‘I am seeing the thought.’ Also, you should make a constant effort to know whether ‘I am thinking or I am not thinking.’ This is not difficult. Imagine a screen is before or within you. The screen may be white, or black or any colour – this depends on the elemental structure of your personality. The colour of the mental screen will change constantly because the elements in the body change from moment to moment.

When you close your eyes you are aware of darkness and this is known as the inner space or inner firmament. It is this inner space which provides you with a screen. You must project your thoughts on this screen, but these thoughts must spring from the bottom of your consciousness spontaneously.

There are two types of thought: the thought which emerges from the depths of your consciousness and the thought which is created by some disturbance outside, such as a thought that a man is passing through the porch. This is an external thought which gains entry within. An internal thought is when perhaps you suddenly remember your parents and the thought has no particular connection with the previous thoughts.

Through inner silence you try and exhaust the entire fund of subconscious thoughts which are expressed spontaneously, and you do not put a break on any thought. So you project any thought that comes from inside onto the screen, and throughout the practice you remain aware of the thinking process and of each thought. Sometimes you will think a particular thought, but you will be unaware you are seeing it and only when that thought has already passed will you remember, "Oh, I was thinking that particular thought."

Sooner or later, within a few weeks or perhaps a few days, you will find your mind is becoming quieter and quieter. Inner silence is the practice of tranquillity and a part of pratyahara in yoga, where our senses are withdrawn from the objects of awareness.

There are always some thoughts which are ready for purging, ready for expression. It is like the process of food digestion and elimination. You eat certain food which remains in the stomach for five hours or so, goes to the small intestine for a few hours and then to the colon, and after that it is ready to be eliminated. In your personality there are hundreds and thousands of impressions belonging to the life, and imported from outside, belonging to previous lives or inherited. These impressions must be exhausted through the path of meditation.

So, certain thoughts are just at the doorway. These have come to a mature condition, to a state of fructification. This particular stock of thoughts must come out. They cannot be suppressed. On the other hand, those experiences or impressions of previous lives or of this life which are still in a premature condition, even if you want them to come out, remain inside because they are not mature. The meditator will have to exhaust all the thoughts which are awaiting expression at the gateway of his mind. He does this through inner silence.

In meditation, inner silence is the first practice. This practice may continue for days or months. You may exhaust most of these compelling thoughts within a few weeks, and

then you will find calmness comes spontaneously to your mind and that compulsion of thoughts from within does not constitute a great distraction. But distraction may be in thoughts from outside – loudspeakers, radios, children, cars passing, a train or aeroplane and also in the thoughts of the future, “Oh yes, I must remember to bolt the door; I must get this done in the office; I must get my son or daughter educated.” So many troubles are found in future thoughts and these have to be worked out.

First, you must work out and exhaust the thoughts or impressions which are waiting to express themselves. You try and see your thoughts for as long as you can, whenever possible, not only in the morning, or at night, or in the calm and quiet atmosphere of your room, but anywhere. Even now. Do not just see those thoughts for half an hour. No. Become aware of thought at any moment. Thus you will evolve the faculty to see your thoughts without difficulty right from when you get up in the morning to when you retire to bed at night. Do you know how many thoughts come to your mind during the day? You must develop this faculty and the moment a thought arises from your consciousness you should know “It is here, I know and now it has gone.” You should be like a traffic policeman who notes every car that passes. If you note the nature of the thoughts during the day, you will find your meditation is much more successful.

What about anticipation of the future? When you sit for meditation no thoughts of the past may occur, but you can be plagued by anticipation of future events. You are always thinking about future difficulties – financial troubles, marriages, divorces, economics, family, will, when or how will they happen and what can you do about them, etc.

When a particular thought comes to your mind concerning a future problem which either you are anticipating or which arises because of a basic fear in your personality, when the fear comes, “Maybe this danger or crisis is about to occur”, what are you going to do? How can you pacify that thought? The thought is not pacified and

you force yourself into meditation. In deep concentration visionary fears will arise, you will see dragons, ghosts or serpents. You might think them to be indications of good meditative progress, but they are just expressions of your fearful anticipations. So what is the use of going ahead with meditation unless this particular problem of consciousness is solved?

This is the method for dealing with this problem. The moment a fear or any other complex concerning the future comes to your mind, let it come and let thoughts about it develop to the extreme. Here I talk about problems of personality, psychological problems. Let these develop to the extreme, so much so that you think your worst fears will be realized and nothing but bad will happen to you. Come to the point where you are finished with the thought, and then cut it off and bring into your mind a counter thought. For instance, it may come to your mind you are going to suffer a financial crisis. Let the whole thought work itself out to the maximum. Finally, when you have thoroughly worked through your fears and are finished with the thought, cut it off. Now pose the counter suggestion, i.e. "No, I can manage my financial problems whatever happens. I might starve, so what! It does not matter." I mean that kind of heroic thought. Thoughts full of courage, thoughts full of strength of confidence. These counter thoughts, these positive thoughts, neutralize and overcome the negative ones. This is the law of the mind.

31

Yogic Tranquillizers

You can vary the mantra *Soham* by reversing the words *Hamso*. The difference will be, whereas in *Soham* you start with the incoming breath, with *Hamso* you start with exhalation and with the descending passage. So you start at the pineal gland and exhale down through the spinal cord first with *Ham*, then when you ascend and inhale it is *So*. *Hamso*, *Hamso*. The mantras *Soham* and *Hamso* are equally powerful. Inhalation and ascending is still *So*; exhalation and descending is still *Ham*; you have only changed the circuit of idea and instead of *Soham*, you are thinking of *Hamso*. You should practise, first *Soham*, then *Hamso*, let us say twenty times *Soham* and twenty times *Hamso*.

Om can be done in two ways: either you can chant *Om* with the inhalation and *Om* with the exhalation; or you can chant *Au* with inhalation and *m* with exhalation and again *Au* with inhalation, so you chant and carry it on to become *Aum* (*Om*). These variations help to deal with the mischievous mind.

You should sometimes practise breath awareness counting the breaths, but you will find when you are chanting the mantra it is very difficult to count. Therefore we use a rosary or mala. Malas have 108 beads; 49 beads are just reserved for thought and breath awareness and 59 for mantra and breath awareness. It will help to put a marker after 49 beads.

You can practise it this way. Sit down in a posture. Chant *Om* three times to stabilize the mind. Become aware of the practice and the mala in your hand. Then practise thought awareness for 49 beads and mantra awareness for 59 beads. Then breath awareness only for 49 beads and mantra awareness for 59 beads.

These are the tranquillizers which help to lessen the area of your thought consciousness. Your mind should become comparatively quiet; you will be able to switch your consciousness off from the outer things. A quiet mind is one where no thoughts arise. All thoughts, past present or future, are disturbances in meditation and prevent you from enjoying peace and tranquillity.



32

From Shore to Shore: A tour report

On 26th April 1968, Paramahansa Satyananda Saraswati left the shores of his beloved motherland India. “The purpose of my journey,” Swamiji said, “is to promote world peace and universal brotherhood, restoring the dignity of man through the glorious medium of yoga. Society is rapidly disintegrating and the survival of humanity is in question. I am compelled to go.”

Swamiji arrived in Singapore on 26th April 1968, the first stop on the global tour. Singapore is an independent state and predominantly Chinese in ethnic character.

At the airport, Swamiji was received by important dignitaries, among them yoga teachers from various yoga institutions, the proprietor of Dalamal & Sons, host of Swamiji’s stay in Singapore, and many members of the Indian business community. Swamiji was garlanded with flowers and the members of the press who were there asked for an immediate conference. Following the conference, Swamiji was escorted to the Malaysia Hotel, situated in the centre of the city, and there he remained comfortably throughout his stay.

Most of the trained yoga teachers in Singapore spent hours with Swamiji at the hotel, inspired by his concise conception of yoga, and the methods and techniques involved. Meditation classes were conducted for the key students who came regularly to absorb his teachings. Every evening different programs were arranged at various

locations and Swamiji spoke with a dynamic fervour, stimulating an enthusiastic response to the practice of yoga.

Interviewed by Singapore radio, Swamiji's talk was relayed throughout the country. His discourse at the Singapore Yoga Health Centre was a notable occasion during his Malaysian visit. Many of the yoga teachers from various institutions attended this lecture. Swamiji spoke at length on the need for meditation and the benefits of hatha yoga, combining physical and mental discipline towards an integration of the human personality. He talked of the need for understanding clearly the techniques of yoga before actually putting them into practice. Following the discourse, the president and members of the centre gave Swamiji a splendid reception, where he was honoured as a very special guest.

Another memorable occasion for Swamiji was at Johto Bahru, a sanctified location not far from Singapore where Swami Sivananda had lived and practised medicine. Swamiji was deeply moved to be in the exact place where his beloved guru had once lived and worked for humanity.

Among those most deeply inspired by Swamiji, was yoga teacher Miss Margaret Wong (Indira Devi) who followed Swamiji's instructions implicitly and attended all his lectures, becoming one of his ardent disciples, dedicated to Swamiji's yoga mission in Singapore. Her oneness with Indian culture and the great yoga tradition was extensive, and Swamiji felt she had much to contribute in Singapore.

Seven days after his arrival in Singapore, Swamiji left for Hong Kong, accompanied by Margaret Wong.

Hong Kong

On 3rd May 1968, Swamiji arrived in Hong Kong in the early afternoon, accompanied by Margaret Wong (Indira Devi) and Mr Wadhupal Dalamal, a leading sponsor of Swamiji's global tour, from Singapore. At the airport Swamiji was enthusiastically received and was escorted to the airport VIP room, where press photographers and representatives awaited him.

After the press interview Swamiji was taken to the Mandarin Hotel. The following day news of Swamiji's arrival was broadcast on radio throughout Hong Kong and for five succeeding days Swamiji held meditation classes at the South China athletic association, arranged by the Divine Life Society of Hong Kong. These classes were highly stimulating for the students who, until Swamiji's arrival, had practised only hatha yoga.

The specific technique of ujjayi pranayama was well received and was a great help in the practice of fundamental meditation. Yoga asana demonstrations were given throughout by Indira Devi. For two days, in the afternoon and in the evenings, Swamiji met the Indian community of Hong Kong, giving them practical knowledge in the science of yoga and how to apply this science in their own lives.

On 8th May, the day of his departure, a formal reception was given for Swamiji by the Hindu Association at the Mandarin Hotel. Over 200 enthusiastic students, devotees and admirers came to pay their respects.

"Hong Kong," Swamiji said, "is spiritually aware, but teachers must be sent here for the further training and further development of the people."

Australia

The success of the Australian program was due to Swami Nirmalananda, Miss Roma Blair, an ardent disciple and devotee of Swamiji. Swami Nirmalananda had spent time with Swamiji in India training with him at the Bihar School of Yoga in Munger, attending the International Yoga Conferences and taking every opportunity to absorb the many teachings of her guru. A tireless worker, Nirmalananda has done a great service to the cause of yoga, spreading its message throughout Australia through the medium of television and radio.

An expert in her own adaptations of hatha yoga, Nirmalananda has a large number of trained yoga teachers in Sydney, and she spends a great part of her time checking their activities and instructing them in new yoga techniques.

Swamiji was given maximum exposure to a large segment of the Sydney population by means of television and radio programs.

In Australia enthusiasm for yoga runs high. There are over 1,000 trained hatha yoga instructors at present and, therefore, the reception to Swamiji's presence was great.

Swamiji arrived in Sydney on 9th May 1968. At the airport he was welcomed by Swami Nirmalananda with a group of her yoga teachers, John and Patricia Mumford and Mr Kriplani, a proprietor of Dalamal and Sons. The press were on hand to give Swamiji extensive interview coverage and, in the afternoon of the same day, live radio interviews, broadcast throughout Australia, gave the news of Swamiji's arrival. Other high points of Swamiji's visit to Sydney are as follows:

- 10th May: Newsreel interviews; private interview with Sir Roden Cutler, Governor of NSW; lectures at Sydney University; private interview with Archbishop Sloane. Evening: The Hebrew Temple, hosted by Dr Rabbi Brasch.
- 11th May: Lecture at Patricia Cameron School of Yoga; lecture at Triad School of Yoga.
- 12th May: Visit to Bahai Temple, Anzac Auditorium, Divine Life Society gathering – satsang and spiritual guidance from Swamiji. Evening lecture at the Wayside Chapel.
- 13th May: Large meeting of yoga teachers at Swami Nirmalananda's studio in Sydney area; live television interview on the Hazel Phillips show. Television dialogue on yoga relaxation; lecture at Swami Karmananda's studio (Michael Volin).
- 14th May: Lecture at Sydney University on the topic 'Relaxation through Meditation'. TV live: The Tonight Show on Channel 9.
- 15th and 16th May: Melbourne program. Lectures and practical instruction at the Gita School of Yoga; hostess: Margaret Segesman. Return to Sydney in the evening.

- 17th May: Private interview with Cardinal Gilroy. Afternoon and evening lecture at the studio of Swami Nirmalananda.

Swamiji's observations: "Australia has the beginning of a spiritually awakened country and now hundreds more will be drawn to the more advanced stages of yoga through meditation. It is up to the many yoga teachers in the Sydney area to continue the yoga teachings of meditation, as well as instructions on hatha yoga, so that this spiritual awakening will be permanent and effective. The seeds have been sown and the foundations are firm. Australia will develop rapidly."

Japan

On his arrival at the Tokyo International Airport during the afternoon of 18th May, Swamiji was met by a throng of Japanese admirers, led by Archbishop Okano, president of Kodo Kyodan Buddhist Fellowship and Mr Wadhupal Dalamal.

That evening, the Indian club of Yokohama gave a special dinner for its members to which Swamiji was invited as guest of honour. About 100 people gathered around Swamiji as he entered the room. They were grateful for this opportunity to meet him and to be reminded of the holy traditions of their beloved homeland.

The next day Swamiji was taken to the Kodo Kyodan Buddhist Fellowship. There he saw the original bone relics of Lord Buddha.

The members of the institution conducted themselves with the greatest dignity and discipline, sitting quietly in vajrasana without moving throughout the entire lecture. Over 1,500 people were there, awaiting the arrival and discourse of this great Indian spiritual master, Swami Satyananda. He then gave a talk on yoga and the modern world. At the end of the talk, the film of the International Teachers Training Course in Bihar was shown.

On Monday Swamiji lectured in the afternoon at the Tokyo University. This program was arranged by the

President of the Japan-India Society, Dr Hajime Nakamura. A press interview followed his lecture and Swamiji was requested to give a series of Vedic chants which were recorded.

On Tuesday, May 21st, the students of Tokyo University welcomed Swamiji's return visit to their campus. There he gave a talk on the principles underlying yoga philosophy which was followed by questions and answers. This program was arranged by Professor Doi, Japanese National Scholar of Hindi and Sanskrit, and the Director of the Indian Philosophy Department of Tokyo University.

That evening Swamiji left by train for Kobe where he stayed for two days, lecturing at both the Indian Club and Indian Association of Kobe. A private dinner for over 150 was given in honour of Swamiji's visit.

Swamiji returned to Tokyo on 24th May, to lecture at the Kodo Kyodan Buddhist Fellowship. There, 2,000 people gathered to hear him speak.

In the evening, Swamiji addressed members of the Indian Embassy of Tokyo, speaking on the need for meditation to relieve the tensions of modern man. Professor Doi of Tokyo University and the President of the Japan-India Society in Tokyo, were co-hosts.

On Saturday, 25th May, a reception in honour of his departure was given at the new Grand Hotel by Mr and Mrs Okan of the Kodo Kyodan Buddhist Fellowship. Later, at the Airport, Swamiji was given a hearty send off.

Honolulu

Swamiji arrived in Honolulu in the morning of 25th May and was taken directly to the Princess Kaulani Hotel situated on Waikiki Beach.

In the evening Swamiji addressed a large gathering of students at the Hawaii University. There, many question were put to him regarding the higher aspects of spiritual life – how to find real peace and tranquillity within.

An interview with Swamiji on the Honolulu radio network resulted in many people coming to Swamiji's two evening

satsangs at the residence of Mrs Sundri Watumal, hostess for these informal discussions.

In Honolulu, Swamiji encountered the hippie community for the first time, many of whom attended his lectures. Through the hippies and through the many young people in Honolulu, Swamiji sensed a tremendous need for proper spiritual guidance. "Sincere, serious and receptive, these young people search for values and a higher means of self-expression. They are eager to learn and practise the teachings of yoga", he said.

Swamiji was impressed with their enthusiasm and as he boarded the plane on 28th May for the United States, he expressed his regret at having to leave so soon. "I want these young people to have further yoga training," he said. "They are the ones who will shape the future for all mankind."

San Francisco

Swamiji arrived in San Francisco the morning of 29th May and was received by Dr Haridas Chowdhry, president of the Cultural Integral Fellowship of San Francisco. Dr Chowdhry undertook the responsibility of organizing Swamiji's San Francisco program, turning over the Institute to Swamiji for conducting both practical classes in yoga and holding theoretical lectures.

On 30th May, a large audience attended Swamiji's lecture. He emphasized the need for the practical application of the yogic techniques. "Actual practice," he said, "is the only path towards spiritual development."

For three more days the discourses on yoga continued at the institute, as Swamiji covered many aspects of yoga: karma yoga, bhakti yoga, jnana yoga and raja yoga. Meditation classes followed the discourses and practical instruction was given.

Two evening meetings on 2nd and 3rd June were held at the Metaphysical Library, where members and the general public come to read books based on Indian culture and philosophy.

Swamiji dealt with the topics: 'How to Integrate Yoga in Everyday Life' and 'Yoga as a Means to Harmony Within', emphasizing the devotional aspects of yoga, the path of bhakti yoga, its methods and practice.

Swamiji's visit to the hippie community was an interesting experience for him. "Hippies," Swamiji said, "are the neglected children of a divided family system in America, and they have taken to yoga to find a meaning and purpose for their lives."

On the last evening in San Francisco, Swamiji was invited to the residence of Jim Bradley, a great follower of yoga and an ardent devotee of Swamiji. There, Swamiji responded with great dynamism to the questions asked of him on spiritual life.

The next morning Swamiji left for Los Angeles.

Los Angeles

On 4th June, Swamiji arrived at the Los Angeles airport and was received by Mr and Mrs Chaney, directors of the Astara Foundation, an institution for research in mysticism and spiritual healing.

From the airport, Swamiji was escorted directly to the International Hotel, Los Altos. Later, Mr and Mrs Chaney took Swamiji on a personal tour of the surrounding area.

The following day Swamiji was interviewed by Los Angeles radio. A visit to Mr and Mrs Chaney's Astara Foundation in the morning interested Swamiji greatly and he was impressed by the activities of the foundation.

From the Astara Foundation, Swamiji was invited to Ananda Ashram founded by Swami Paramananda, a disciple of Swami Vivekananda.

In the evening a program was arranged by Mr and Mrs Chaney at the Astara Foundation, where Swamiji addressed a large audience. There, he emphasized the need of yoga psychology for modern man. "The cure for anxiety, neuroses and mental conflict," he said, "lies in the proper application of yogic techniques, and japa yoga, a constant remembrance of the name of God, is the real basis for mental peace."

Mental equilibrium, Swamiji stressed, is a necessary condition for spiritual illumination.

The following day Swamiji again addressed the Astara Foundation. He explained the mysteries of the mind and the levels of consciousness, stressing the importance of meditation to transcend the mind's limitations.

On the next day many people came to Swamiji for personal guidance and mantra diksha. In the afternoon, Swamiji visited Sivananda Yoga Ashram, run by his gurubhai, Swami Vishnudevananda.

In the evening, Dr Judith Tyberg organized a fine program at the East-West Cultural Centre, Dr Tyberg is a disciple of Sri Aurobindo and is well-versed in Indian philosophy. Swamiji spoke on the meaning of yoga and the union of individual consciousness with Cosmic Consciousness. "Yoga is the only method which will unite all mankind," he said. "Yoga is the means to world unity. Yoga is not a religion, but a science. It does not belong to any particular sect, but when practised it brings about complete mental tranquillity and joy within."

On 8th June, Swamiji left Los Angeles for Chicago.

He arrived there in the afternoon and was received by Kenneth Tenny and Mr Umrolia. In the evening, he was interviewed by the press, and later addressed the First Liberal Psychic Science Church, speaking on methods, stages and development in meditation.

The next morning Swamiji was received by Swami Bhashyananda of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society Mission. At the Mission Swamiji spoke on jnana yoga and its practical application. He stressed one point: "Through yoga and meditation techniques, individual consciousness merges with Cosmic Consciousness, and thus true knowledge becomes self-effulgent."

In the evening, Swamiji gave a lecture at the first Progressive Spiritual Church, speaking on bhakti yoga, the path of devotion and love. "Try to develop the heart, as well as the head, in order to come closer to reality. No amount of intellectual knowledge will ever move the soul."

On the evening of 10th June, Swamiji addressed the Unity Unitarian Church and his discourse was well received.

On 11th June, the final day of Swamiji's program, a lecture was arranged for him by the Theosophical Society at Akbar Hall. The people were impressed by Swamiji's message: "Yoga, the culture of today and the hope of tomorrow."

On 12th June, Swamiji arrived at Kennedy Airport and was received by Ma Yogabhakti (Blyth Gilmore), New York representative of the International Yoga Fellowship Movement. After speaking to members of the press he was driven to his hotel.

During his stay he visited universities, psychic institutions, a women's prison, Young Women's Christian Association, and the leading yoga institutes in New York. He lectured at the Universalist Church and the Community Church of New York, and he also visited the Sivananda Yoga camp, in Val Morin, Canada, under the direction of Swami Vishnudevananda, and the Ananda Ashram in Monroe, N.Y. founded by Dr Mishra.

He visited the underprivileged areas of New York, acquainting himself with the negro and the hippie communities in the downtown Village area.

He was also interviewed several times on television and radio, the programs reaching a large audience.

The highlight of Swamiji's visit was the Town Hall lecture given before an audience of over 1,000 people. Dr Joseph Gelberman, rabbi of the Little Synagogue of New York city was host for the evening: Swami Satchidananda, of the Integral Yoga Institute in New York, was present. Demonstrations were also given as Swamiji described the various benefits of yoga asanas.

Swamiji's last two days in the New York area were filled with personal interviews every fifteen minutes and practical classes were given every hour.

On 26th June, Swamiji left for London and a large group of devotees was at the airport to bid him farewell.

London

At the airport to meet Swamiji on 27th June, were a number of loyal devotees, among them Kishu Dalamal, Swamiji's London host and program organizer, Mr Soudhi, President of the Hindu Centre, and members of the Indian business community.

Press photographers were waiting to cover Swamiji's arrival and after the photos were taken, Swamiji was escorted to the Maharaja's Lounge for a press conference.

On 28th July, a lecture was held in the centre of London at Caxton Hall. It was the first in a series given by Swamiji to the people of that city. He spoke of the bright future of yoga in the Western world and dispelled existing misconceptions.

On 29th June, Swamiji visited the Sai Baba Centre where he was welcomed by Aji Bai Banarase. He gave a discourse in Hindi, followed by bhajans, before a large and interested group.

In the evening, a meeting was held at the Hindu Centre and Swamiji gave an inspired and instructive talk on japa yoga, stressing the importance of remembering God's name as the shortest and surest way to inner tranquillity.

On 30th June, a meeting was held at the Hindu Centre in Southall. There, Swamiji addressed his brethren in Hindi. His talk was inspiring and the Indian people were pressed to think deeply on their great Hindu culture and the responsibility they have spreading its uniting message within the London community.

In the evening, Swamiji gave a talk at another Hindu Centre in London, founded by Mr Soudhi.

On 1st July, Swamiji addressed members of the Acacia Healing Centre, founded by Mr and Mrs Francis. Swamiji spoke on the path of meditation, emphasizing meditation as a means to developing the mind as a more active and efficient instrument.

2nd July was Swamiji's last program at Caxton Hall, which was filled to capacity. He gave a talk on meditation.

On 3rd July, Swamiji addressed a group of members at the London Society for Psychic Research.

On 4th July Swamiji left London for Manchester. In the evening a public meeting was held at the Manchester College of Technology, where a large number of Indian and Europeans had gathered. When the program ended a number of yoga teachers from the Manchester area came to meet Swamiji and receive spiritual guidance.

On 5th July Swamiji returned again by air to London and was welcomed at the airport by his devotees.

On 6th July Swamiji left for Paris and many devotees and friends came to see him off at the airport.

Paris

Swamiji was received at Orly airport by Swami Devatmananda and many other devotees, and was taken to the house of Dr C. Guinebert. Swamiji received many yoga aspirants and a meditation class was held in the evening.

The next program was at the residence of Dr Donnars, one of the leading physicians of Paris, where over 60 men and women of the medical profession had gathered. Their interest in yoga was great.

On the 7th July, Swamiji went to the Ramakrishna Centre in Gretz and met Swami Ritajananda and Swami Vidyatmananda. Swamiji delivered a lecture on 'How to find God.' At night a reception was held at the residence of Mrs Suzanne Andre.

On the 8th July, Swamiji was interviewed on Radio Luxembourg.

The next program was a hatha yoga demonstration and Swamiji gave a detailed commentary. This was followed by a meditation class.

In the evening Swamiji delivered a lecture at the Musée de L'Homme to an audience of 1,000. The topic of his talk was "The *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali."

On the 9th July, Swamiji moved to the residence of Swami Devatmananda and gave private interviews throughout the

day. A public meeting took place here which was followed by a meditation class.

In the evening Swamiji was welcomed at the Centre L'Homme et la Connaissance (Man and Knowledge) by Mrs Suzanne Andre, a devout enthusiast of Indian culture. Swamiji gave a talk on 'The Techniques of Meditation – a way to Inner Peace, Harmony and Tranquillity'.

10th July was a holy and sacred day for guru and shishyas (disciples). Pooja was performed with fruits, flowers and arati, and Swamiji gave his blessings. In the morning Swamiji gave a talk at the house of Dr Donnars on 'The Psychological Techniques Involved in Yoga'.

The afternoon was filled with a private audience and then a public meeting was held, followed by a meditation class.

On 11th July, Swamiji spent the day at the home of Swami Devatmananda where he gave mantra diksha, private interviews and public satsang. In the evening he gave a lecture on 'The Technique of Trataka'.

On 12th July, he was busy with private interviews, appointments, public meetings and an evening meditation class.

The French Film Company filmed for many hours an entire documentary of Swamiji's varied programs and techniques of meditation given to the people of Paris.

On 13th July, the last day of his stay in Paris, many people came to Swamiji to express their gratitude for the new spiritual life awakened in them through his presence in Paris.

A reception was given at the residence of Swami Devatmananda in the evening by all the devotees.

The next day Swamiji left for Brussels by car with Swami Devatmananda.

Belgium

On July 14th Swamiji arrived in Brussels. A warm welcome awaited him at the Yoga Institute (Founder President Andre van Lysbeth) from his host and many other yoga devotees.

A reception was given at the institute and yoga students gathered around Swamiji as he spoke of his world tour and his recent visit to Paris.

In the evening, a large number of people came to the institute to hear a lecture by Swamiji on 'Methods of Relaxation through Yoga'.

In the evening of the following day a large crowd assembled at the Yoga Institute to see the International Yoga Teachers Training Course film which was followed by a short talk.

July 16th, Swamiji had lunch in Ghent at the home of Mme Baertsoen where he was received by the Consul General of India, Mr Robert Desprechins.

Following this, Swamiji visited a well known boy's camp in Drongen.

In the evening, in a room filled to capacity, Swamiji delivered his last lecture at the institute.

On July 17th, Swamiji left Brussels for Bruges accompanied by Mr Van Seelen.

Swamiji attended Mass at the beautiful Benedictine monastery of Bruges. The Benedictine Fathers sought his guidance on many spiritual matters and had discussions on the philosophical background of all religions.

In the evening Swamiji addressed a gathering of yoga aspirants in Bruges. He spoke on 'The Dynamic Aspects of Yoga Philosophy' and its application in day-to-day living.

From Bruges, Swamiji and his group drove to Aalst where a great gathering greeted him.

On 18th July, three 'National Yoga Days' were declared in Aalst where Swamiji stayed with Sita and Ram (Mr Saenih). People came from all over Belgium and stayed throughout the three days to hear the teachings of Swamiji.

Swamiji gave lectures and practical classes in the Town Hall, where each session was filled to capacity.

Holland

On 21st July, Swamiji arrived in Holland. An enthusiastic reception awaited him at the home of Mr Vunderink, his host.

In the afternoon, Swamiji gave private interviews and in the evening a public reception and period of questions and answers was held, to which members of the press had been invited.

The following day, Swamiji had private interviews and gave spiritual guidance to yoga aspirants, and in the evening he addressed an enthusiastic group of yoga students at Scheveningen, opening a five-day practical yoga course.

The following morning, Swamiji had a long press interview with Amsterdam's leading newspaper, *De Telegraph*. Throughout the day, people came to talk with Swamiji.

In the afternoon, he addressed an informal gathering of people from the community of Ede. In the evening he spoke to a gathering at the International Club in Wageningen and spoke briefly on the impressions of his world tour. The film of the First International Teachers Training Course was shown with Swamiji giving the commentary.

The next morning, a meeting was held at the home of Mr Vunderink which was attended by yoga students. In the afternoon Swamiji again received many people individually for spiritual guidance and instruction in sadhana, and in the evening he returned to Ede to address a group of yoga aspirants at the home of Mr Samshuyzen. There, he had an interview which was taped and broadcast the following day.

25th July was filled with interviews, group gatherings and informal talks. Yoga classes began and the home of Mr Vunderink was transformed into a temporary yoga ashram. That evening Swamiji gave a discourse in Utrecht on 'The Expansion of Consciousness through Meditation,' followed by questions and answers.

Swamiji went to Scheveningen for the last day of the practical yoga training course. From Scheveningen he was driven to Amsterdam. He visited Fantasio, one of Amsterdam's hippie strongholds and stayed for over an hour talking with those who questioned him.

27th July was Swamiji's last day in Holland, and a lecture and public reception had been arranged. Later that evening,

Swamiji again visited one of Amsterdam's hippie night clubs, Paradiso, where he delivered an informal talk on yoga.

By request, he conducted a practical meditation class for over 900 young people. Swamiji said, "You can be sure that out of all these people, at least two or three will take to the path, and it is for these I have come."

London (2nd visit)

Swamiji returned to London on 28th July. Mr and Mrs Francis were among those who welcomed him at the airport and were his hosts for the return visit.

In the afternoon, Swamiji addressed a yoga seminar at the Acacia Healing Centre on 'Inner Silence'.

From 29th July to 3rd August, Swamiji conducted meditation classes at Caxton Hall, where the gatherings were very large.

In the five days of practical classes different practices were covered by Swamiji, among them japa yoga, antar mouna and yoga nidra.

Daily, after these classes, Swamiji addressed groups of devotees at the homes of various Indian families and took asana classes at the Acacia Healing centre. For the major part of each day he was engaged in private interviews, mantra diksha and addressing small groups of teenagers.

On 4th August, Swamiji had a busy program. The Hindu Centre in Southall invited him to speak in Hindi to his Hindu brethren at their morning lecture. He spoke on bhakti yoga, the path of devotion, and after the talk he sang bhajans and recited parts of the *Ramayana*. In the evening he addressed another Hindu Centre, this time in English, with both Indians and Europeans attending.

One of the highlights was his visit to Westminster Abbey. For the very first time in the long history of the Abbey, a sannyasin from India preached before a Christian congregation. Among those present were the Dean and Arch Dean.

Swamiji began his discourse in Hindi and, after a few opening words, chanted hymns in Sanskrit as requested,

followed by his address in the English language. “Yoga is not a religion,” he said. “Yoga does not belong to any particular sect but to all. Yoga is a science and a way of life. In this present age of turbulence and frustration all should practise yoga to regain mental equilibrium and harmony within.”

On 6th August Swamiji had two programs in the city of Birmingham, near Manchester. The first was arranged by Mr Verma of Gita Bhavan. A large group of the Indian community of Birmingham had gathered to hear Swamiji discourse in Hindi, followed by some kirtans. Later, Swamiji addressed another gathering arranged by the British Yoga School.

Copenhagen

On 7th August Swamiji flew from London to Copenhagen, to be greeted by his disciples Mrs Guni Martin and Sulabha (Elsie Helland), among others.

In the afternoon, a press conference took place there and, in the evening, a satsang was held.

Throughout the day, people came to receive spiritual guidance in private interviews and through mantra diksha.

A public meeting was arranged by all the yoga teachers in Copenhagen at the National Museum, where over 600 people gathered to hear Swamiji’s discourse. At the end he gave meditation techniques for all to practise so they could experience for themselves this inner tranquillity and profound upliftment.

West Germany

On 13th August Swamiji flew from Copenhagen to Hamburg where he was received by Mr P.G. Nebhnani who drove Swamiji to his residence where he remained throughout his stay. On arrival he was interviewed by members of the press.

In the evening, a number of Indian devotees came to pay their respects. He told them that they should not forget their spiritual heritage and should always remember God under all circumstances.

On 14th August Swamiji gave private interviews during the morning. In the afternoon a television interview took place.

That evening, Swamiji lectured at the Lotus Yoga Zentrum where many people had gathered to hear his discourses on yoga.

On 15th August, private interviews were again given. In the evening, there was a lecture at Siemens Hall to a capacity audience, and again the entire program was televised. "Yoga," Swamiji said, "is the union between individual consciousness and Divine Consciousness. Yoga is not a religion but a science which, when practised, brings about tranquillity within. Yoga is an act through which we go inward, that's all; it is a process of communion with one's inner self to unite the two different personalities."

The next day a public meeting was held at Hopkens Ruh Hall, Bremen, by the Indo-German Society.

On 17th August, Swamiji visited Swami Dev Murti at his Ashram in Stuttgart. Swamiji emphasized the importance of japa yoga as the shortest way to inner tranquillity. "A constant remembrance of God thins out mental depression and brings about peace of mind."

The next day Swamiji returned to Hamburg and a satsang was held at the residence of Mr Nebhnani.

On 20th August Swamiji gave a discourse at the Hamburg University, which was arranged by Mr Jain and Professor Bernhard.

21st August was the last day of Swamiji's program in Hamburg and he addressed a meeting at American House which was televised.

The next day he left by air for Zurich.

Switzerland

Swamiji flew to Zurich on 22nd August where devotees gave him a hearty welcome. Mr Karisek was host and program organizer.

Swamiji was taken to the Carlton Hotel where he stayed for three days. In the evening he gave a lecture at the hotel where many of the business communities came to hear his discourses on yoga.

The next morning Swamiji left for Basel to visit Mrs Schneider and, in the afternoon, her yoga students came for interviews. In the evening 700 to 800 people gathered at Basel University Hall, "Yoga," Swamiji said, "is not a running away from life, but the proper understanding of it."

On 24th August, many came to see Swamiji for spiritual guidance. In the afternoon he returned by car to Zurich for more private interviews, and in the evening he addressed a small group and gave them a few practices on mental relaxation.

On August 25th, Swamiji left by car for Fribourg for his next program, which was arranged by Dr Robert Bosch. Swamiji stayed at the Yoga Ashram Fribourg for three days.

The next day he gave a lecture to a group of yoga students in the ashram and explained the benefits of yoga postures. A television interview followed and the entire program was broadcast.

On 27th August, Swamiji addressed a public meeting at Fribourg University.

The following day Swamiji left for Geneva to address two public meetings arranged by Mr Jean Roost, Swamiji's host. Press reporters interviewed him and he stressed the need for yoga in the present troubled times. An evening public meeting was held at Sellede Hall.

On 29th August many came to ask for personal and spiritual guidance. In the evening he gave a meditation class.

The next day Swamiji left for Lausanne and gave a lecture at Lausanne University Hall.

On 31st August Swamiji left for Paris for a four-day return visit.

Paris (2nd visit)

Swamiji arrived in Paris that afternoon, where a large number of devotees had gathered. He stayed for two days at Sivananda Ashram, the spiritual home of Swami Devatmananda.

On September 1st, Swamiji conducted a meditation class and in the afternoon addressed a group at the Sufi Centre.

The next day Swamiji conducted a yoga nidra class, private interviews followed, and people came for spiritual guidance. In the early evening, he gave ajapa japa in the Sivananda Ashram and later addressed a public meeting at the Institute de Movement.

On the third morning Swamiji spoke on mantra yoga. After the meeting, prominent doctors, psychologists and psychiatrists sat with Swamiji for spiritual guidance.

In the evening he addressed a large gathering on kundalini yoga.

The next morning Swamiji left by air for Vienna.

Austria

On 4th September a large reception awaited him at the airport.

On the 5th, people came for private interviews with Swamiji and in the evening he conducted a meditation class. The Indian Ambassador, Mr Trivedi and his wife were also present.

On the 6th, many came for private interviews and in the evening a yoga seminar was initiated by Swamiji at the Afro-Asiatisch Institute Hall, arranged by Mr and Mrs. Keyserling.

From the 7th to the 10th, in the mornings, Swamiji taught asanas, pranayama and meditation and in the evenings conducted yoga nidra.

Teheran

On 11th September Swamiji arrived in Teheran, where he was met by Mr Wadhmal Dalamal with a number of Indian

friends and Mr Hinduji, Swamiji's Teheran host, who drove him to the Sikh Gurudwara where he stayed for five days.

Swamiji had requested no public meetings, as he had come to spend a few days in seclusion.

Swamiji spent the next day at the residence of Mr Hinduji where a number of dignitaries came to have private interviews. Swamiji was interviewed by the press and the following day appeared on a television program.

On 17th September Swamiji left by air for India, his tour completed.



Notes

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Notes

Swami Satyananda was born in Almora (Uttaranchal) in 1923. Drawn to spiritual life from an early age, he left home at the age of eighteen, and in 1943 surrendered himself to Swami Sivananda in Rishikesh who initiated him into Dashnami sannyasa in 1947. He served his guru for twelve years, perfecting every aspect of spiritual life. Thereafter, he travelled throughout the Indian subcontinent as a wandering ascetic.



Realizing the need of the times as scientific rendition of the ancient system of yoga, he founded the International Yoga Fellowship in 1956 and the Bihar School of Yoga in 1963. During the next twenty years, Swami Satyananda hoisted the flag of yoga in every corner of the world, consolidated BSY into a foremost institution of yoga, and authored over eighty major texts on yoga, tantra and spiritual life.

‘Satyananda Yoga’ became a tradition which combines classical knowledge with experiential understanding and a modern outlook. In 1984 he founded the Yoga Research Foundation to synchronize scientific research and yoga, and Sivananda Math to assist the underprivileged. In 1988, at the peak of his achievements, he renounced everything and adopted kshetra sannyasa, living as a paramahansa ascetic. In 1989 Rikhia was revealed to him, where he came to live and performed higher vedic sadhanas in seclusion. Receiving the command to provide for his neighbours in 1991, he allowed the ashram to help the underprivileged villages in the region. From 1995 onwards, he performed a twelve-year Rajasooya Yajna with the sankalpa of peace, plenty and prosperity for all, and in 2007 he announced the establishment of Rikhiapeeth with its mandate to ‘serve, love, give’.

Swami Satyananda attained mahasamadhi, a yogic accomplishment of discarding the body at will to become one with the universal consciousness, in 2009, in the presence of his disciples.



In 1968 Swami Satyananda Saraswati embarked on his first world tour, visiting Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan, Australia, USA, UK, Europe and Teheran. Welcomed by people from all walks of life, Swami Satyananda gave talks, classes, media interviews and private consultations, tirelessly teaching, guiding and inspiring the international community with the message of yoga.

Yoga from Shore to Shore is a compilation of the lectures and interviews from this historic tour. Topics include karma yoga, raja yoga, mantra, kundalini, consciousness, meditation techniques, yoga nidra, the spiritual revolution and God realization. Step by step instructions are given for specific meditation and relaxation practices alongside clear guidelines for living yoga in daily life.

This landmark collection is a record of the beginnings of Swami Satyananda's global mission. The universal appeal of both his message and his personality ensure the enduring success of Swami Satyananda's commitment to spread yoga from door to door, and from shore to shore.



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